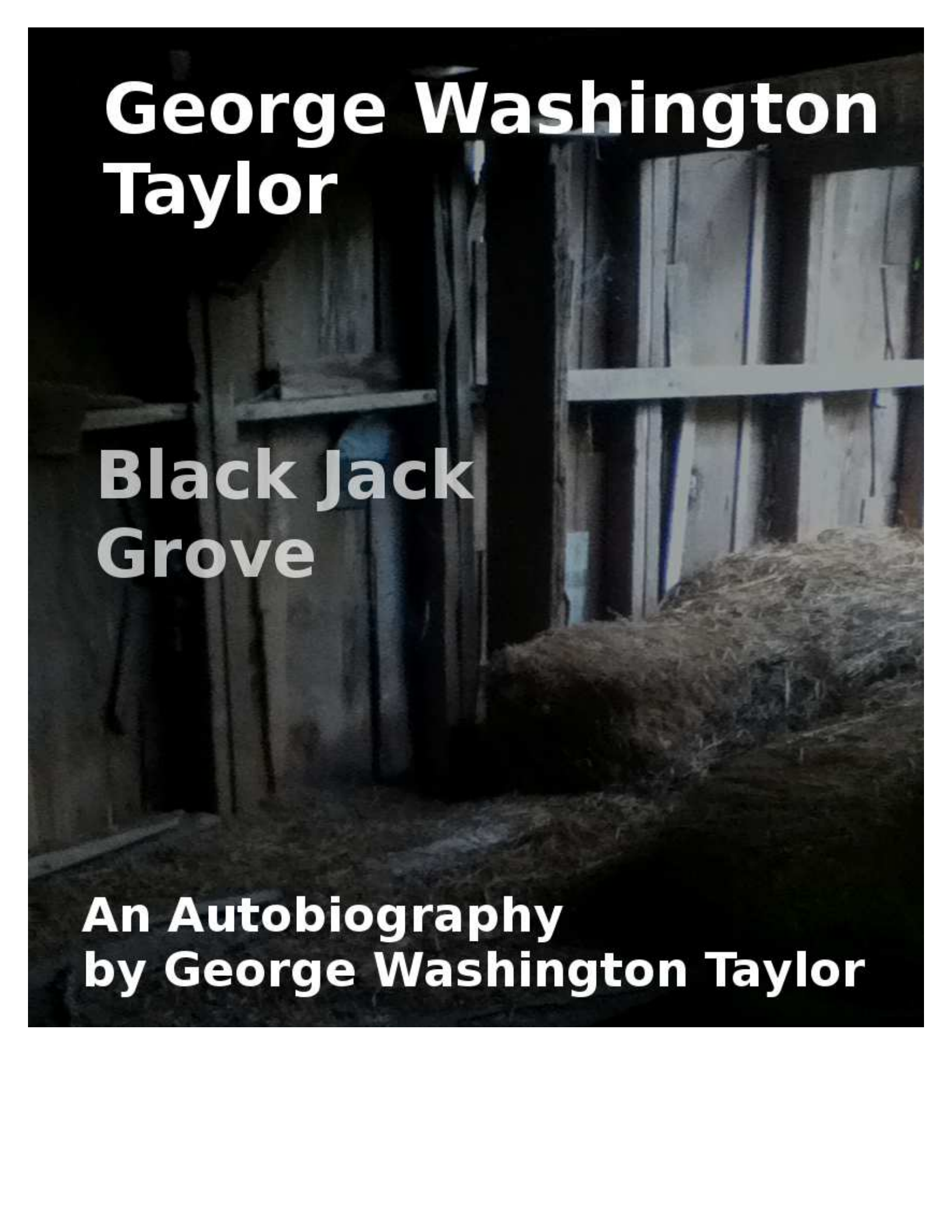




George Washington Taylor

Black Jack Grove

**An Autobiography
by George Washington Taylor**

George Washington Taylor

Black Jack Grove

Autobiography

by

George Washington Taylor

**Transcribed for The Taylor Winniford Archive Project
This document is in the public domain.**



THE MADISON MAXWELL MONROE TAYLOR DESCENDANTS

I, George Washington Taylor, was born within the same minute that my father died. My father Madison Maxwell Monroe Taylor died of a fever in Little Rock, Arkansas on February 22, 1862. The fatal fever was contracted during military service in the early days of the Confederacy. The colonel as his negro slaves in attendance called my dad told my mother that bad drinking water and outdoors sleeping in cold tents caused the deadly fever, not death from a combat wound.

My mother had received a letter the day before Christmas from Dad saying that he felt bad and had a slight fever. Then, after New Year, mother got a letter from the Little Rock dispatch hospital that her husband Mr. M.M. Taylor was seriously ill. She was big with child, of course, but feared the worst and prepared accordingly. Three weeks were required to get ready for a long, cold trip to the hospital; at this time family members were welcome to come attend sick soldiers in the meager hospitals, even Yankee Union troops allowed their family to nurse their own sick when possible or so the story goes by folks and relatives who visited from the North after the war between the states. This was no civil war because nothing ever was civil about that war between the states, as my mother so often said in her older age about this period of time in her life, when newspaper columnists referred to the rebellion as the civil war.

The war torn times required that the women run the estates of their husbands. Mother knew how to make all the slaves continue doing their work on the place. Thus, the news that her husband was very ill from a fever was truly very bad news because folks did not survive fevers very often in those days. Preparations for the unheard of winter trip by a pregnant woman was readily undertaken by my mother as her duty and deep devotion to the father of her many sons. Provisions in 16 wagons were taken for the 275 mile voyage one way to the sick bedside of her husband. Six feather beds were layered into her covered Sunday-go-meeting carriage to absorb the rough ride and to protect the unborn child. And a large barrel of brine water was prepared to pickle the corpse in case the worst happened because all the Taylor family was buried on the side lawn at Cherry Wood, the old home of the Taylors near Winnsboro, between Como, in Franklin County. The slow, cold trip took over a month. Fifteen house niggers were taken to care for the cooking and personal needs of my mother; another 25 field niggers were needed for attending to the horses, wagons and general camping chores.

Mother reached the hospital grounds which were little more than tents late in the day. Her husband, or 3-M as she called him, was out of his head with the mortal fever but he did finally recognize her. He had five personal negroes attending his every needs; all these slaves had been taken from Cherry Wood when he went off to war. These slaves were to

set up the tent and make camp for Mister M or the Colonel as they called my dad or so mother always said when telling these old stories. The 5 darkies did not carry guns, for their duties were to attend to the personal needs such as unloading supplies and of course setting-up the tent with its heavy iron bed that had been cast from old Revolutionary War rifles used by our Taylor ancestors in the war with the British. Slaves had even made the ornate bed to my dad's specifications years earlier back in the old blacksmith shop on the old homestead. This spectacle of a caravan of niggers arriving with a huge woman in a fine carriage into the sick camp was grim and not one full of plessantries.

Well, the reunion was very short because the dying husband gasp her name and then died in mother's arms upon this arrival. The intense anxiety immediately put the new war widow into child labor. The corpse of my father who was not even cold yet was quickly removed from the field officer's iron bed and the birthing then immediately took place. The baby was a boy born of strife and grief on the same birthday as the Virginia founding father first-president of the American republic so that became my given name.

My birth however was recorded later in the family Bible as being at Cherry Wood where all the family had been borne or so my mother said was the reason for changing the true facts not to say Little Rock was my place of birth. The excitement of the death and birth had really scared the darkies.

The frightened darkies really did show their fear when the body of old master Madison Maxwell Monroe Taylor was pickled in the brine water barrel for the long return trip to Cherry Wood where a decent funeral could later be arranged for a proper service and Christian burial with grieving respect could be shown. Mother knew exactly what she wanted done and always went about getting her way, no matter what the trouble it took or caused. The negroes were very quiet and did not sing or even go close to the wagon with the dead man all the way back to Winnsboro.

All 16 wagons got back to Winnsboro by April 1, 1862 and my dad was buried with due respect for a big landowning gentleman. But the duties of planting crops in the early spring kept my mother very busy, going from one big field to another. Every cotton row was a mile long and was laid out in a section of land to the cotton field. She had 30 such cotton fields to oversee with 175 field niggers working, but she wisely took a 100 at any one time to the same field so as to finish each section of land before going to the next one. My mother managed the landed estates of several neighbors as well; the Sullivan family on the next plantation was her favorite friends. Young Laure Estelle Sullivan's mother had died and her father was a medical doctor needed at the war front.

The war front seemed far away at that time, even though Marshall, Texas was the Confederate governing capitol for all states west of the

Mississippi River. And other southern slave states had sent their slave workers far away from the fighting front lines in Virginia, South Carolina and Georgia to East Texas plantations to continue working to produce cotton and food for the soldiers. My mother was a great organizer for the labor camps during these days or so she said. My mother was the overserer of several East Texas ventures during the war years.

War ventures of gun running was also a necessary thing. She went to Jefferson to barter goods and she always required payment in gold coin during those days. Every gold coin that she got she buried in the storm cellar at Cherry Wood plantation. Mother sold guns and ammunition to the neighbors as well as to the Confederate army. One of her suppliers was from Dallas County. Norvelle Winniford supplied guns and ammo through the assistance of other relatives who lived near Black Jack Grove or now called Cumby. Cumby was on the road to Jefferson which was the old Spanish King's highway patrol to keep unwelcome land squatters from coming to Catholic Texas. Old Black Jack Grove was a camping ground under very large blackjack oak trees there. Well, all the guns and ammunition came from old Mexico into Texas.

The Texas to Mexico gun running line required several different people to work that profitable venture every week. Profit was the name of the game or so mother always said. She took wagons of cotton bales to sell so as to disguise the return of guns being brought back in seemingly empty wagons. Sometimes, she met troops at the Red River near Shreveport, Louisiana to deliver the guns and ammo; money in gold coin always exchanged hands. Mother even took her baby during the warmer weather months; I sometimes think that I can remember the long wagon rides late at night but am not sure, enough, to relate any details of the gun running events. She used every possible cover to keep the every day citizen from realizing what she was doing because not everyone was a true Confederate. Also, the guns and ammo would make a good prey for thieves that would line their own pockets from the profiteering of war, just like everyone else was trying to do. Usually, whole families took the risk of gun running because not everyone could be trusted and most often a family would stick together -- that's why Norvelle Winniford with his kinsmen near Cumby was trustworthy to relay the goods. Mother then picked up the shipment near Jefferson to the Red River, only once did she mention ever going all the way to Little Rock, Arkansas with a wagon load of guns for the troops.

The wagons of guns were driven by the darkies. The same darkies had gone to Little Rock when I was born so they knew the way and were trustworthy. They did not know really what they were doing, just following orders as usual, when Miz Mamm spoke--the niggers called mother Miz Mamm. They knew to obey her but she was good to them when sick or needed anything. Most of them were worth a thousand dollars each when in the prime working years so they were not to be mistreated or harmed in any way. Much like a valuable thoroughbred horse, only the darkies were like

little children obeying an adult. They did not receive any education. Field niggers did not need to know very much according to the dictates of the owners. And the house niggers did not receive much more education either but they just naturally learned a lot from the white owners who were served each day. I was given my own little darkie to play with; he was a year or so older than me and was named Boyee, being pronounced closer to Bowie which is the way his grandchildren spelled his name long after being freed. Boyee was told to call me Little Mister. And my playmate Boyee had all the same privileges as myself; his mother was proud of the status, even though she was already the head house nigger; we all called her Mammie.

The house niggers were trusted more than the field darkies and also had more responsibilities that required intelligence to do. They really ran the place and got the work done-- when the negroes did not want to work, nothing much got done that day, for they could kill time by just pretending to be busy while actually not doing anything much. But the meals and housecleaning had to get done eventually so they did not piddle all the time. The field darkies did get more than a scolding when the day's quota of work was not done; they were not given favorite foods or let wander around the place on Sunday.

Sunday was a time of rest for most of the negroes; they sang and had a church of their own in the big back barn. The services were in their negro lingo and a mixture of English songs. Their worship was more fun for a young boy like me to attend than to go to church in town at the Methodist Church. Daddy became a Methodist as a compromise with mother; she was Pennsylvania Dutch and he was Scottish Presbyterian before his marriage. He had been traveling through the state of Pennsylvania to buy a Conestago wagon when he met the daughter of a wagon maker. They got married by the strict preacher of her father's faith and then went back South and then to Texas to build Cherry Wood.

Marriage to a slave owner by a strict spartan religious girl was a shock at first, I am sure. But mother loved to work hard since she was used to laboring and now she had hundreds of people to manage and a great estate to run. The challenge was her mainstay in life. Just tell her that it couldn't be done or that a woman could not do it and, man, would she ever get busy to show how wrong everyone was about that idea. Mother said can't never could so never say that word can't to her. God gave her the strong constitution to labor long hours and to build something good out of nothing, like the making of lumber from big trees on the place to build Cherry Wood house many years ago. Mother had always worked hard long hours along the side of my father so being a dainty wife of a rich planter did not suit her. She could shoot a gun as good as any man and knew more than most as she liked to say so often. No one could hold a candle to her workbrittle ways when she got started. And no one could disagree with her, either. She never took no for an answer once she had made-up her mind that she was right or as right as anyone else on the subject, at hand.

Being right was very important to mother. She was not a woman to be reckoned with once she had made up her mind that she was right. And the war between the states was her main cause because of the issue of state's rights; she was well educated and read newspapers from home where she grew up in Pennsylvania. The mail arrived weeks late to Texas even long before the war but she read the newspapers of the day back then and even during the years after the great war was over. Anyway, mother said that the real issue of the war between the states was not over slavery but was to dethrone the aristocracy reign; and the only way to destroy the aristocratic rule was to annihilate their source of income that enabled them to govern as a leisure class the way the British noblemen did. The idle rich of the cavalier class in the South ruled the American republic most of the time until the federalist whigs organized a party called the republicans. Republicans are common proletarian citizen businessmen who want the power for themselves and just use the smoke screen of slavery as an issue; they don't like or sympathize with negroes--they don't even care about darkies one way or the other until the issue of power in Washington can be resolved toward the rising industry tycoons, rather than a landed gentry keeping a centralized government from getting so big to boss the little states around like old King George III tried once too often to do. Man, my mother knew her history well and enjoyed talking it, too. She hated big businessmen everywhere; bankers and mill owners were her favorite political enemies. Only a small cottage industry business was deserving of her blessings. Mother did not trust bankers anywhere, north or south. That's why she required gold coin in payment for her hard work. She thought ole Lincoln was a dope or else a misguided simple minded fanatic who was easily controlled by the money lenders of the eastern banks.

Lincoln was just a big front window dressing prop used by the growing or emerging industrial factory owners. In fact, Mother met the lady from Black Jack Grove who had been born in Springfield, Illinois and knew Lincoln personally. Her father Urbane Alexander had served in the Illinois militia under Captain Abe Lincoln and they even attended each other's weddings. But the Alexander family went South to settle on their Spanish landgrant during the Republic of Texas days just like the Taylor family did also want freedom from the bloking of the United States congress. And then the free country of Texas joined the Union because of the close ties of those Tennessee politicians fleeing west and then later wanting to rejoin their old buddies; Sam Houston was one of those empire builders for the United States; ole Sam is a Jayhawker hidden somewhere in the Big Thicket wilderness close to his Liberty county law office. He is on the side of the federalist rather than on the side of Texas like he should be or so my old mother would complain.

The side of Texas was the only side to be on, as far as my mother was concerned. And she often remarked that those Alexander folks did not own slaves or even permit a negro on their land, yet they believed in states' rights which is what the Confederacy is all about. Time will prove us right, bragged my mother even after the war between the states was over. She was not a good loser when she thought she was right about something.

Mother had thoughts on every subject in the world. She had a mind and was not afraid to use it. She kept the law of the community alive during the war between the states by quoting the Bible when any difficulty arose and said that King Solomon was her precedent for passing judgement. People listened if not always heeding her way of thinking. She quoted the Bible on matters of slavery being sanctioned as good because the master must be obeyed; she knew the scripture well enough to justify her own convictions on having slaves.

The slaves did work very well for her. The crops during the war were bumper yields. Mother had all the barns full plus make shift shelters in the deep woods; she hid her crops from all knowledge of the Confederate leaders because of any taxation or confiscation. She had sold a great deal of cotton to the gun runners who had smuggled the bales out through old Mexico. Mother had done well during all the war years but was not prepared for the defeat of the Confederacy.

Defeat was not easy for such a strong personality or steel will of Miz Mamm as the negroes muttered. When the Union troops arrived to occupy the county seat, mother stayed at home with a lookout placed to notify when the troops would ride up, to the big gate to Cherry Wood. The signal was finally given and mother went to the front gate with her youngest child dressed in a long flowing baby dressings gown. I do remember being held close in her arms as she stood in the middle of the driveway gate. Mother announced in her loud Pennsylvania Dutch accent to the Yankee general that she was the only damn yankee ever to step foot on this plantation and no other yankee would ever get on this place without first crossing over her dead body with an infant in arms.

The yankee general threw back his head and laughed a loud lusty guffaw. And then he just rode on by, never once trying to enter the place. But most of the negroes did leave Cherry Wood to go with the Union troops. Negroes poured out of the low hanging trees and ran over the fences to get onto the road. And the yankee soldiers did kick the big gate posts and wrought iron railings as they passed along; the scars remained forever marked from their kicking rocks and chunks of wood at the gate. Mother never moved till the whole army had gone; she stood her ground ready to die for her words or convictions. She closed the big gates and slowly walked back to the big house. She once told me that she was just tired, not depressed, for after all she had won her way to keep a damn yankee army off her property--the great General Sheridan was that yankee with a sense of humor when he heard another yankee accent order him off a Southern plantation. She had meant every word she said.

Mother's angry words were never to be taken lightly. She always had a good reason for doing whatever she did. All the crops stored on the place was just over half a million dollars in cotton alone that she sold much later in the year to the brokers out of Jefferson. And the gold coins still remained buried in the storm cellar behind the big main house. Mother was a very rich widow in cash. Only a dozen house niggers remained on the place and just one field darkie stayed.

The one field nigger was all mother had to make a crop in 1865. At the end of the first day's work on one of those mile long cotton rows in a 640 acre section, that lone field darkie had not hardly reached the end of the first row. Mother looked outward from the front porch and sighed, "I always knew that one nigger was not worth a damn." Times did soon get better for finding workers because the war ending did indeed bring back the menfolk. Sharecroppers worked the fields that had once been teeming with black faces full of their working songs; the joy of work never seemed to return to the fields like the niggers made when the white people worked the land. Also, the huge thick forest of trees in the bottom land provided timber money for mother and she then went to raising cows and horses. Her older sons were able to work the land but brother Nimrod soon married into the local Cook family.

Nimrod Taylor went to town to buy most of the supplies for the needs at Cherry Wood; he and his bride lived at home. Most families lived two or three generations to a house back then--just wasn't the thing to do to live by ourselves. And it seemed odd for the townspeople of Winnsboro to call us farmers when we bought supplies. Usually, all of the Taylor family went to town on Saturday to buy things while the bill of supplies were being ordered up. The Taylor family was still the landed gentry but the elegance of negro slaves attending the carriages in uniforms no longer gave the owed respect in town; planters had been our way of life and grand description for our livelihood--farming seemed to equate the business enterprise at Cherry Wood with the dirt farmer class.

But farming was indeed the business at the old plantation. Mother still had a fortune in gold and the new federal greenbacks since the cotton crops stored during the war between the states had been sold and the windfall deposited in American dollars. The old Confederate bank had failed along with all the securities deposited therein becoming absolutely worthless; just as the bank had been issuing federal dollars prior to 1861, the bank had converted all the pre-war currency into Confederate dollars whether the depositors wanted to or not. And then the failure of the war efforts made lots of folks lose every saved cent they had. But mother no longer trusted banks or believed in them because of that costly experience, yet she had dealt in gold coin for the guns and also most of the cotton crops sold during the war when she could sell goods to the other gun runners who took her bartered produce to old Mexico. Mother had to do business with the bank and did keep her new federal dollars deposited there. The gold coins remained buried in the storm cellar at Cherry Wood. Mother was very stingy and did not let everyone in the family know about her stash of cash, which I knew about because of being so young as to hang onto her coat tails as she went about her business on the place.

Buying supplies in town on Saturday was big business and also a big event for us at Cherry Wood to get to socialize so everyone went to town if at all possible. My brother Nimrod T. Taylor had married into another old Winnsboro area family; the Cook family however had a feud going. And on a November day in 1868, a shoot out occurred on the main street of Winnsboro. Nimrod Taylor was fatally shot and was declared deceased on November 28, 1868.

My older brother Nimrod T. Taylor lay dead in the middle of the main street of Winnsboro. His body was riddled with bullets and everyone in town had witnessed the shoot out. My mother had seen with her own eyes the whole thing from start to finish, just as had the rest of our family and the whole towns people. Nine men had shot lead into young Nimrod Taylor as he was caught in the crossfire of the feud.

Those nine men were well known leading citizens of the community and kin to the sheriff. Not one person was ever arrested for the murder or charges were never made because of the nature of the feud not being directed personally toward Nimrod who just happened to get caught in the crossfire. But my mother was not one to take this tragedy lying down. She accused all 9 men personally and even the sheriff got called all the names he deserved but nothing legal ever came of it all. All the murderers got off scott free from the very beginning, and to add complications to the matter Nimrod's wife was pregnant and soon to have their child.

The child was born at Cherry Wood, a boy named Nimrod Junior. He was raised by his grandmother. Every Saturday when the Taylor family went to town to buy supplies, Miz Mamm as many folks called mother would parade the young Nimrod Junior in front of the 9 men who shot lead into the unfortunate Nimrod. Mother would point her long finger into their faces and loudly proclaim, "This man shot your daddy dead in the middle of the street and no one will do anything about it, even the sheriff over there on the sidewalk will not do anything." She did that every time the family went to buy supplies; that public outrage of hers went on for 9 years.

When Nimrod Junior was nine years old, he killed the first man of the original 9 men who had killed his father in the crossfire of the feuding shoot out. The sheriff and his posse went riding out to Cherry Wood to arrest the Nimrod boy. But Miz Mamm stood firm on the front porch with her arms on her hips and told the legal arm of the law to get the hell off her land. Mother made no bones about her disgust for their authority and mealy mouthed self-righteous sudden regard for the letter of the law. She exclaimed, "You, sheriff, would not arrest one of the 9 murderers of my son Nimrod when he was killed in cold blood on the public street of Winnsboro. But now that one guilty SOB has finally gotten justice at the hand of a mere boy as you seem to think has been done, you come screaming out here for blood. The spirit of the law has finally gained some justice for the wrong done my family by your cutthroat relatives, sheriff." The posse never dismounted their horses and all the men knew mother spoke the truth about the first murder never even being investigated or charged on the books by the sheriff. But mother was madder than a wet hen and full of selfrighteous glee as she continued to show her anger. She said, "I am not about to let any of your cowardly men come into my home to arrest a mere boy for a murder of the mean menfolk who shot his own father dead in public. You will all have me to reckon with before this young boy Nimrod Junior ever gets charged with a murder for killing a man who killed his own dad. And I once told a yankee general with his whole army behind him to get off my land here; I am not afraid of a bunch of men with guns--justice is on my side so get off my

land and don't ever come back." The posse just turned and left that night when the first man was shot dead of the 9 who had killed her son Nimrod.

Killing of the rest of the 9 men who had been involved in the crossfire of the deadly shooting of Nimrod in Wimsboro was a common occurrence during the next three years. Nimrod Junior had killed all 9 of the men that his grandmother had been pointing her long finger in their guilty faces all those formulative years. Nimrod Junior had even taken a shot at the sheriff just to let him know that he too was not without some guilt in the old grudge. At age 12, Nimrod Junior had finally avenged his own father's murder. The sheriff got off easy with only a limp for the rest of his life to remind him that a Taylor murder does not go uninvestigated or ignored forever. Of course, the sheriff had always returned to Cherry Wood with a posse to hang the young Nimrod Junior after each killing of yet another of the 9 feuders.

The posse had finally even ignored the vile threats of Miz Mamm. The sheriff and his men had walked around her heavy footed stance on the big front verandah and gone searching inside the big two story house. No one ever found the boy Nimrod. He hid behind the fireplace mantle that barely pulled from the wall to let a skinny kid slip through. The whole chimney system for the house had a huge center bricked flu that had a large fireplace outlet in a circular arrangement to each room, both downstairs and upstairs. The crawlspace was very small from the side of each fireplace outlet that fanned outward from the centralized flu; the ornate mantle front of course covered any holes in the wall where the curvature of the bricks met the plank walls. Anyway, Nimrod Junior always hid in the narrow crawl spaces which no one knew about, except for mother and myself, and of course young Nimrod. Even the darkies did not know about the secret passage for they usually knew everything that the white folks did or said and delighted in later telling it all about the countryside. Secrets were not well kept from anyone for long, except for this secret space and the gold coins hidden in the storm cellar.

The storm cellar was another favorite place to hide young Nimrod. There was a large oval place where the steps descended into the dampness. A back wall had shelves to store eggs and fruits and potatoes and onions and all kinds of produce that would not quickly spoil; anyway, that center part of the wall of shelves could be hinged outward for another room to be entered; this secret place was not large like the oval part that 20 feet in diameter to allow for the storage of produce as well as stools on which the family could sit while a tornado was raging outside. A heavy metal door or tin covered heavy wooden framed door protected the storm cellar--bois d'arc was the best wood to use in the making of the cellar and that was what had been used of course. Tornadoes or cyclones were a common thing in East Texas so a lot of time could be spent in that hole in the ground; a supply of candles and flint were there to light the darkness when stranded all night for fearsome storms or afternoons, since late afternoon was a prime time for a brewing funnel cloud in the spring and fall or whenever a warm spell came along after a cold siege. This storm cellar was not a favorite place for the darkies since they thought

that the devil himself lived down there. Perhaps that was the reason mother chose to hid the gold coins down there in the second compartment, buried under the brick flooring. Heavy boxes of things were always strawned over the floor for the very reason of concealing that anything important was buried underneath. An axe and a bucket of water always was kept down in the large oval room in case the house got blowed down on top of the cellar door and we all had to hack our way out. The darkies would of course know and surely tell and they could never keep a secret about the family when they knew something. Yet the darkies would run down to the woods behind the house and barns; the thick forest seemed more protective to them and I agreed as I got older and thus chose to go with them when a funnel cloud came so I could watch its progression while scampering over the countryside. The funnel always followed creeks and low places; the same pathway usually was followed so not a great deal was to be feared if one stayed away from the old storm patterns. But a few hysterical screams from the women folks and the darkies would be enough to make everybody flee in mortal fear of life and limb.

Well, shelter in the cellar for young Nimrod Junior was a common thing anytime any visitor came to Cherry Wood. Nimrod could never go to town anymore or be seen in public anywhere since all the survivors of the dead men were out to get him with blood in their eyes. However, mother justified the whole killing spree by informing everyone at church that the murder of her son had gone unreported officially and never even investigated, much less an arrest since the whole town had witnessed the shoot out that dreadful day in 1868; mother was more upset by that street shoot out than when the yankee general Sheridan had rode up to the gate with occupied force against all the big slave owners. Not even the death of daddy and the immediate birth of me that late afternoon in Little Rock seemed as hard to bear as the murderous shoot out. Someone had to pay for the murder of her son in public was what she always said. Mother made all of us Taylor boys promise that Nimrod Junior would never hang for what he ~~did~~ since an eye for an eye was God's way originally for the chosen people of God. A mere boy had to do man's work to get justice for the public murder was what mother always said when justifying that young Nimrod Junior had killed 9 men by the tender age of 12. Nimrod never had a normal life; he had to hide from everyone who came to the door; Cherry Wood had a mile long drive from the main wrought iron gate so no one could easily gain entry to the front door. Even the house niggers realized that the sheriff would never have done anything about the old murder. Nimrod was almost like a hero at home, much like Jesse James in our own midst so the whole family was willing to protect the boy, even when he was grown. Nimrod Junior hid in the woods also; a big grove of cherry trees still existed beyond the house; lots of wild cherry trees grew in East Texas. All the timbers in our big old house had been hued from large cherry trees that had been cut to build the place during the frontier times before the Republic of Texas even came into existence.

The Taylors had helped pioneer Texas while the Spanish king still had his regular patrol travelling the old King's Highway through the Big Thicket timberland of most of East Texas. Trees were so thick that a horse could hardly ride through with a man mounted all the way northward to presentday Paris and above Texarkana where old Ben Milan had his homplace; a big log jam blocked the Red River in my youth above where

Texarkana now is. Flat bottomed boats came up the rivers back then to all the settlements, especially from Shreveport, Louisiana into the East Texas area, after the log jam was blasted away. The coming of railroads though ended the steamboat trading. The vast forest of old East Texas was a wonderful place to hide from authorities. And that was a godsend for young Nimrod. He often hunted and fished in the bayous. Nimrod just could not go to town anymore. Everyone in the family however was always on the look out for danger to Nimrod.

Nimrod was safe from the law as long as his grandmother lived. But Miz Mamma could not live forever. That shirttail sheriff was after all the Taylor family, to pin anything legal against us if he could. He said that all the Taylors were a holler on wheels with Miz Mamma being the worst. I got bored staying at Cherry Wood all the time and having to sit on the porch like a lookout for strangers or known crooks coming to our place. I did drink a lot of the good home brew variety hooche but that was like everybody at that time because peach brandy wine was easy enough to make from all the wild Indian peach trees in the piney woods all over East Texas. Having a hefty supply of our home made medicine was necessary for ailments like the flu and most any other malady. Snake bites needed a shot to keep us from feeling the pain when the poison was cut out. Wild plums did not make as good a brew as the prolific Indian peaches that grew everywhere. The berry that grew wild also made a good brew. We had lots of the good stuff stored in barrels to last through the winter. The niggers did not bother our storage barrels because we told them that the barrel used to pickle my old dad's body was still inside the barn there. I sure knew how to keep a dorkie in his place away from good stash of stuff. The niggers could make the stuff as good as anybody but they never stored enough to last for long, guess they sold it or traded it off as soon as they made it so we white folks really had to protect our supply from them because the darkies were all over the place most of the time and couldn't be carefully watched. But they didn't like the sheriff any better than we did so they did let us know when someone else came around, even though they always blamed someone else when anything was disappeared on the place.

The niggers had a high standard of behavior by blaming someone else who was known to be mean for things that happened. A good example was the big nigger Mammie on the neighboring Sullivan plantation. The two girls Jenny and Laura Estelle were protected by the head house nigger after the mother and father had died during the war between the states. Ole Doc Sullivan had even got a Confederate medal for his part and then a fever got his wife to leave the little girls to be raised by the house niggers and their older brother Henderson Sullivan. Well, my brother Ike and myself went courting over to the Sullivan place.

That Sullivan nigger Mammie was uppity and high headed as all get out about being proper to rear those girls of hers as she called them. She thought she was the Queen of Sheba or something special beyond words. She said Miss Laura and Miss Jenny were true princesses, all because their poor dead mother was Laura Giles Sullivan descended from the royal house of Giles in Ireland; she was a royal descendant of the noble kings of Ireland and they were too good for the likes of us lawless killing Taylors. That old nigger carried on like that every time we went a courting and it

is a marvel that any of us Taylors ever got close enough to marry those girls; my brother and I married those sisters only after our maw Miz Mamm brought the Taylor genealogy charts to show that old uppity ape woman that our ancestral descent went back to saving Julius Caesar's life on a plain in ancient Gaul; Hanger was the given name of our first noble distinguished ancestor back in 58 B.C. The name Hanger Talliferreo was the real name but the British say Tolliver and Talbot for the slurred long Talliferreo name and thus Tayloe got corrupted into the way the English people say the name, according to my mother who read everything that came her way. That was just like the English as our Scottish folks liked to say; the Scotch-Irish always believed the worst about any Englishman. But that haughty house nigger never again insulted us when we went courting anymore and too she did not like the sheriff any better than we did but for different reasons.

Ike and I married those Sullivan girls despite their uppity nigger mammie. Laura Estelle was my wife and Jenny wed Ike. Laura Estelle had long auburn hair just like her dead mother Laura Giles Sullivan. None of our children ever had colored hair like their mother though. But that old nigger mammie went most places with us even after getting married; she moved all over the country with us and would never leave her baby as she called Miss Laura. We got along very well after that because I was always outside and going places to get away from all the bossy woman folks. Only once in a blue moon would I tangle with that nigger mammie on any subject, just wasn't worth the effort or pains.

That nigger mammie was a pain in the pants when she wanted to be or thought she was right, just like my old mother Miz Mamm. I always had some kind of a woman folk on my back telling me what to do and how to act. My mother tried to make me do just exactly what she wanted me to do but I got around enough to be my own person; mother was used to slaves being ordered about so she just couldn't help from being that way I always thought till that old house nigger tried to do the same thing to me--guess my life was meant to be bossed by some tyrant or dictator so I just got around it all. I went to town to drink with my buddies when I could; saloons were a common thing because rest stops along the roadways from Jefferson to all the little settlements around kept enough people going and coming that saloons could do fairly well. Drinking was done by all the folks, even preachers who also made the brew like everyone else.

Drinking was something the sheriff liked to blame as the reason for arresting some folks and not others. That shirt tail sheriff arrested any Taylor for the least provocation possible when given half a chance. I cost my mother a lot just paying fines every time I went to town; poor little ole Nimrod did not of course go to town ever but I did and that was good enough for that mean old sheriff to hightail himself over to me and put me into jail. It was almost a game to see just how much trouble one could make for the other. All that sure beat sitting around bored on the verandahs keeping watch for trouble coming home to Cherry Wood.

Trouble was my middle name all my life. I did try to keep out of the way of those who disliked me but one could not run all the time. I did however go hunting and fishing a lot. The pine woods were a good place to get lost for weeks at a time; I went deep into the trees from every direction away from Cherry Wood. I had at first explored just to be away

from all the bossy folks in my life. I soon learned to chart my own course through the heavy trees--that's why I know just how far the old Big Thicket went before all the big bad lumber companies came to ruin the natural bounty of this land. But I guess we Taylors help start it all when we first came to cut the cherry trees to build a big house and then cleared those 640 acre fields by the dozens so as to raise cotton and own niggers and thus be as rich as the older kin back in Virginia and Maine, even. Wealth to impress folks is such a waste of time, but money does gain respect because my mother was highly feared in a very respectful way because she was rich with gold coin and also the big bank account along with over twenty thousand acres of land and the biggest house around. But she did not live just to be rich and mean; she was mean enough when made mad to do her own angry fit without needing a minion to do her dirty work like so many rich people do. Mother was not afraid to speak her mind anywhere at any time; she had the courage of her convictions.

Mother's convictions were like judge and jury when she knew she was right, just like the feud shooting of poor old brother Nimrod but she harped on that old dead horse of a subject until a vendetta got started and that is why I don't mention more names because I don't want my grandchildren to go back to Willsboro with an old score to settle some day like the McCoy and Hatfield famous feud. But then I am writing this story of my family when I am old on new year at the middle of the twentieth century; a daily diary entry would surely have included complete names and the anger of the moment, I am sure, yet I was too busy living the life at the time to write it all down then. My grandson Bobby wants me to tell all the old tales of the family and what I did back then; getting together at Christmas can end up with a lot of work just to please some youngin. The remembrances of an old man are not easy to write.

Well, my old mother was not a person to be reckoned with as I have said before; she never forgot anything that was said or done against her or her children. Mother protected young Nimrod with the fervor of a religious evangelist and that required our staying close at home most of the time to be bored to death. I used to run away into the woods down behind Cherry Wood house and stay gone for months during the warm months and as time went by I stayed some during the colder months, learning to live like an Injun chief so to speak. I learned to hunt and trap and it was all more fun than being couped up on the front porch of Cherry Wood watching for a shirt tail sheriff to come arresting my nephew Nimrod or me again because of my drunken spree in town. I fought anyone who said a bad word about any one of my relatives; no one would whip me fair and square but the law looked me up many a times. Being in jail was not so bad because other high rollers were there too and talking and singing to the banjo sure wasn't ever dull.

The dull times at Cherry Wood did get broken by a yearly trip to pay land taxes; mother went in her fine carriage pulled by six horses and nigger coachmen in high hats like old Lincoln had worn; she wanted the darkies to dress like Lincoln just to show that she didn't give a hoot about that nigger lover. Most of the family went along and everybody was armed with shotguns, rifles and pistols to protect ourselves from possible thieves; that old shirt tail sheriff said we Taylors were the thieves so noone would ever attack us on the road. But we always were

armed to the teeth mainly in case that vendetta minded sheriff dared to bother us, for mother took young Nimrod along so he could see how folks lived and acted when free to roam around. We paid our land tax in different counties, depending on the tax rate. Our whole place was a land grant named Cherry Wood long before the Republic of Texas even so our place had been in old time Macogoches County before it got broke up into several much smaller East Texas counties. Sometimes, Morris County was cheaper than Franklin or Wood County and we Taylors had the choice to pay it all in whichever county was the cheapest (times have really changed today enough to make the old folks of my day realize that democracy is not very much alive anymore the individual--the government of the county or city or old Washington, D.C. is now more important power crazed center than ole King George III ever was). Mother paid her tax in cash of course.

Mother got her cash from selling cotton, lumber of sorted timber and wild cattle. We also got to go to Jefferson sometimes to sell things, even got a long trip to Canton Trade Day; mother had taken a yearly jaunt to Canton ever since the early 1850's when it had got started. One had to be a good horse trader to get a good deal but that was never a dull place to go a trading.

Going places was not a very often thing, just nothing much ever happened to merit getting all dressed up for. Besides, Sunday church going to hear preachers rant and rave about how sinful folks were, there just wasn't much to see or do after work around the place got done. And at Cherry Wood the niggers did all the daily stuff and then sharecroppers did the field work; we had to entertain ourselves in the big house.

Organized entertainment was indeed a rare treat. Finally, a grand event came along at Marshall. The famous acting family of Barrymore came to that town. So we Taylors went down there during the excitement of March 1879. Mother got all gussied up and rode in her fine carriage with the niggers in their coachmen regalia; I even wore a suit as did young Nimrod and Ike and older brother W. J. even went along. We were all on our very best behavior so as not to call attention to ourselves. But a very bad thing happened at a cafe or saloon eating place back then. The fracas concerned the actor brother to John and Ethyl Barrymore; the brother Maurice got shot but not to death. His yankee accent and uppity sentiments did not fare well with the local citizens; Marshall had been the government of the Confederate capitol west of the Mississippi River and all records had been moved to this westward governing capitol the last year of the war. And several Confederate generals lived in Marshall yet so the cafe shoot out was more hostile than just a personal dislike of actors; the whole big mess was a reminder of the way my brother Nimrod had been gunned down in town when everyone had been minding their own business until the lawless scoundrels that always exist in every town since the beginning of time to the coming judgement day then decided to show their ugly self, in this case with their fast gun draw mentality. Those out throats gave all of Texas a bad name because all the Barrymores back up north passed the word that Texans were meaner than green grass in the springtime (of course we old time hunters said more salty things to describe those turn of events that just shouldn't get wrote down). We Taylors went home very soon where it was safer or so my old mother declared. We later over the years read about that dastardly deed in some yankee newspapers when we got delivery of them finally; mother got papers from friends and relatives who visited from up north and everywhere else; mother had the wonderlust to know all about other far away places and people even though she had to stay close at home

and protect young Nimrod from that shirttail sheriff out of Winnsboro.

Nimrod Junior did not ask for what life brought him; he was the product of his grandmother's desire for justice; he never complained about being kept secluded and shut away from folks. He expected the worst from people because he was the result of the worst of human nature. He knew that bad things always happened when money and power over others could be exerted; he always said, "that's people for you." when something bad happened.

The people around Winnsboro knew well all the details of the feud and the vendetta of that shirt tail sheriff who was usually branch water kin to most of them--in-laws of inlaws somehow made everyone kin who had settled around there prior to the War Between The States. Thus, folks did not censure the Taylors like being a true murderer. And the Sullivan family was one of the upstanding old families; except for that nigger mammie of Laura's being so uppity like her the Queen of Sheba. The Sullivan place named Grasslands was a shambles since nothing had been repaired since before that dreadful war; the doc had died during the war too. Henderson Sullivan tried to run the 100 sections of land with 3 big houses; he wasn't the forceful type like mother and he was too much the old Southern gentleman to let a woman take charge as mother had once offered to do just after the war ended. He was losing land by the square mile section when he needed money and he gambled as well. We all gambled when given the chance; mother had bailed me out of jail and out of debt dozens of times, so much so that she had often threatened that I would not receive a cent when she died because she had spent twice the amount of cash on me than the others would inherit all together. I am sure she was right in that accounting of facts for she never spoke an idle truth as mere threat or thoughtless facts; she knew the truth before speaking it.

Anyway, the Sullivan girls liked to act like the princess that old nigger mammie said they were; I was as royal as they but did not act like what I was not able to have; the prince of Wales would never have survived living in the woods of West Texas like I could and besides I am sure he had to be extra nice to many folks he could not stand and thus he bored most of the time in all his big drawing rooms. But the Sullivans thought they were more than the gentry they were and Henderson lived the part royally; he was a good sort usually. He just lost land and let the family fortune dwindle away through his fingers, selling off the place without getting signatures of Jenny and Laura who were under age and in his charge. Mother had at first wanted us to marry into the neighboring landed gentry to enlarge our estate; ole Doc Sullivan had accumulated 100 sections of land; patients paid him in produce. Eggs, hams and potatoes by the buschel; and some expensive operations got paid in land. People were land poor back in those days since ~~had~~ ^{had} ~~drifted~~ ^{drifted} parcels of land went by the section to every member of a large family. Folks didn't think twice about letting a few acres get away. Mother though said land was the source for all wealth and power so a Taylor would not sell, ever. Not many families had a leadership headstone like ole Miz Mamm to guide their every thought and action. The Sullivans were spared total domination by a woman with an acid tongue for those who dared to disagree with her. Yet, the Sullivans were poor and getting poorer all the time and not having any fun out of life either, to boot.

The Sullivan sisters Jenny and Laura Estelle married the Taylor brothers Ike and me, George Washington, after announcing the plans on Valentine's Day in 1884. Everybody kin showed up for the event on Easter evening. The already married sisters and their husbands came for the social show of it all and to have fun of course because all our folks did not hold grudges for long against each other or any distant kissing cousin when someone else was ready to do battle against our blood kin. Family loyalty was and is the trademark of the Taylor clan. The Taylors stick together come hell or high water. All the Taylors even favor in looks; we are like Longhorn steers that all look more alike than not is what every Taylor kinsmen always says when seeing each other again. Even mother said the same thing. So, a wedding was just the thing to get us all together again; we had a big double wedding. Ike and Jenny went first ahead of us because Laura Estelle and I were both the youngest or baby of each family as everyone teased us, so we got last billing and thus the most attention before and after the ceremony. Henderson Sullivan was the eldest and he thus already had two nearly grown daughters, just being two years younger than my Laura Estelle. Terza Sullivan and her sister Sarah were bridesmaids of course, to get the pretty nieces into the act. Then, the Tom Melton and the Tom Clifton families also came from their farms near Sulphur Springs; other Sullivan sisters had married into the local gentry as well; Sally Melton tried to run the show as usual. Even the brother Ben Sullivan was there; he later went west and never came back to keep in touch. A great fun thing soon developed after the wedding ceremony because my new bride was now also Laura Taylor to match the name of my own sister Laura to add confusion to being addressed so I just called my wife Laura Estelle to avoid the family confusion. And my sister Dove just laughed at all the funny confusion as usual.

The wedding was the best laughing times we all had during the whole time that we were married or at least lived together. We started to travel a lot soon after getting married when all the old folks started dying off. But that is another story that I am getting ahead of myself.

The big party after the wedding cost a pretty penny, too; Henderson must have had to sell a section or two of land to pay for the affair; that was always thrown up in Laura Estelle's face when the whole place got sold later. The Sullivan house named Crosslands was shabby, yet still looked elegant when seen from a distance; the carpets were frayed and faded, worn thin by hard use and poor times. The old house was set on a long slope where only prairie grass grew; no trees were around the house or the lane from the main road. All the niggers on the place had stayed because not much work was ever done so they liked the free ride; they had a good thing going even before the war ended; all those mouths to feed was a real cost as my mother always said so we were lucky after all that all but one field niggers had gone from Cherry Wood when the yankee army had come. Well, Laura Estelle's nigger mammy had all the youngins or pickaninies dressed with ribbons in their hair ends on the long corn rolls of plaid hair. Their starched dresses made them look elegant. They served all the guest on silver trays. But none of those three dozen pickaninny kid servers looked as quality elegant as my old personally owned playmate nigger slave Boyee; he was a high yellor nigger out of a dude in his fine coachman uniform to open the carriage door for us to ride

in high style to the port at Jefferson. Mother gave us a gift to have a honeymoon at Galveston so off we went. Boyce or Bowie as his grand children spelled his name, to indicate he was a mulatto from the issue of the white Bowie County name sake, to put on airs like all uppity niggers want to do said my mother. We rode off in grand style to begin our wedding days bliss together, the both of us couples, together, along with that damn uppity nigger Mammie to attend to Miss Laura's needs, for she was a lady who did not do hard work with her royal hands, was the excuse. Ike and Jenny and us always stayed together as long as she lived, even went to Indian Territory together, but that is another story for later.

The honeymoon was a long one; we were gone as long as the money lasted for our grande tour that lasted the rest of the year and half of the next. We took the boat to Galveston for a couple of weeks and then went to New Orleans for a month and then back to Galveston and then on to San Antonio; Houston was not much of a place to stay for long but the wide streets were a sight to behold in a muddy messy time. We took the Old Spanish Trail roadway; we took our time slow and easy; we bought a buggy and two fine looking sorrel mares for the girls to ride in with their bossy old nigger Mammie; Ike and I bought a wagon with two mules to haul the supplies; we camped out most of the time of course. We went through the valley of Texas down to old Mexico border and then onward to El Paso and back to Dallas and finally back home to Cherry Wood.

We came back to Cherry Wood in the summer of 1885 and then our first son was born in October; William Hogg Taylor was named for the governor of Texas who was the first native born official in the state. Our second son was named Nimrod but he died soon afterward, seems the name Nimrod has bad things to happen; that was in 1888, and then Guy was born in 1891. We decided to go for adventure someplace; nigger Mammie was bossy as ever, and Jenny liked to travel. Jenny and Ike did not have any children. We decided to go to Oklahoma for the land rush in 1889; we left early in the year of course to be there for the spring time opening in April but lots of settlers had already gotten there to claim the best land ahead of time. We got us a piece of land with sandy soil like back in East Texas where Cherry Wood was. We built a dug out covered in sod to protect from the winters like the Indians did; Ike and I hunted with the Indians; the Quachita Mountains were full of game; we even hunted far into the Arbuckle mountains with Indians to guide us, not so much as guides but for protection because the Injuns as Mammie called them were mad about their land being settled by whites, but us Taylors were dark complected and high cheeked bones the same as the Indians so we got along, especially since we had a nigger Mammie from slave days. The Indians liked having slaves and many tribes did before the war; in fact the Oklahoma tribes had sided with the Confederacy because they had slaves and also were mad at Washington about broken treaties; then the red people got punished for their part with the Confederacy by opening up the landrush as a big price to pay for their rebellion; Washington is always big on giving away what they did not really own. But Indian Terrority still existed in the far western part of the old red man land because of a powwow treat that had set aside Oklahoma Territory in 1890. We met lots of Indians who treated white folks fine as long as they all worked hard together and did not try to laud it over each other. Tales abounded about the last great medicine

man who had been born under the old ways. His name was Wovera and he came down from the hills to proclaim that all his Indian people had lost their lands but would get them back someday long from now when the beautiful bounty was all used up by the white man; Indians told this in rhymes of sorts, "As long as green grass grows and clear water flows; our tristes will be made; the sky will turn dark black all the time and flying things will fall down dead; fish will turn brown and the ground will crack wide open and only then will the white man leave when everything is too poor to support any life, yet the red man will barely survive all this in order to regain all the lost land that is then full of death from air that can't be breathed." Those Indians lived on that promise someday coming true.

My next boy was born in Indian Territory on February 22, 1894; same birthdate as mine so we named him George Washington just like me, only we called him Dude. And then Lissie was born June 14, 1895 in the wild territory also.

And then Jenny Sullivan Taylor died in child birth, finally, having both herself and the baby to die. Ike was never the same; he was ready to return to civilization or at least to where better living conditions existed for the young ones to grow up with advantages like we had when young. So, we packed up in the fall and went back to Texas. We took our time going around telling folks goodbye. We passed over the Ozark mountains, crossed the Washita and then the Red River back into Texas. The Cherokee had been the best friends; the Creeks, Chickasaw, Choctaws and Seminoles were clannish and stayed to themselves mostly but we had got to know some of them.

We moved back to join my brother Bill or W. L. Taylor; we had all left Cherry Wood together when mother died to go west to make sure that young Nimrod would not ever hang for any of the crimes caused by the feud and that vendetta shirt tail sheriff. We had started westward by taking the old road from Jefferson through the Piney Woods toward Dallas; the Road to Jefferson had been the old Spanish King's Highway to patrol the New Spain in Texas from non-Catholic squatters. And old Black Jack Grove camp was where the Spanish troops had quarters on their regular rounds until 1821 and then the Mexican troops soon stopped but by then a regular camp site existed there called Black Jack Grove with wagon trains going through to Dallas from Jefferson. The trail was easy enough to follow since ruts and trees had been cut since 1688, but the camp site Black Jack Grove was on the edge of the tree line, mainly being on the grassy plains. And several saloons existed as an enticement to stay the night there, at least the drinking spots were there when we last went by in the late 1880's. Some high fallutin ladies had used hatchets on the liquor bottles and the furniture to clean up the town; I later found out that the chief instigator was the grandmother of my youngest son's wife, Ella Winniford, who married Tom. Well, here I go getting ahead of myself again.

When the Taylors left Cherry Wood, we all headed toward Dallas on the Road to Jefferson trail or old King's Highway. We indeed reached Black Jack Grove with a long day's travel; I had remembered the lady named Miss Alexander who had traded guns with mother during the War

Between the States and said she knew old Abe Lincoln personally. Everyone around knew a Miss Becky Alexander whose sister did all the trading they said; the sister was Sally Winniford. And that name really rang a bell because the man Norvelle Winniford had sold guns from Monterrey, in old Mexico through relatives of his to us Taylors or rather to mother out of Jefferson. Wessoon found the old Alexander place that was now called the old Winniford place since there were several sons of the name Winniford to carry on the family there. Those ladies were sure proud of their pappa Urbane Alexander who had readrighted that land of theirs but had died there in 1853; he had also been a magistrate during the Republic of Texas days close to Honey Grove but the bees or hornets in the ground there had chased him away from that land survey when trying to plow (they were dirt farmers as I always said about folks who worked their own land and thus had to stay in one place far too long to truly enjoy life).

Their place was nice and roomy but not as fine as Cherry Wood; they had no niggers attall on the place--never had allowed niggers on the place and thus would not let old Nigger Mammie come onto their land; we camped her out on the roadside on the old man Box place as someone called that land with all the bois d'arc trees bordering it to save on fencing. Nothing alive could dare go through the thorny branches of a bois d'arc tree. Miss Alexander was a regal lady who was as proud as the uppity nigger mammie of Laura Estelle's and certainly as grande acting as my old mother; Miss Alexander was might glad that her folks came from Springfield, Illinois with their great uncle William who had founded Alexander county and also that their great-great grandpaw had fought in the Revolution; but then whose didn't in these days of settlers from Scotland roots.

The fact that all our original folks in this country had come from Scotland really pulled us together. The Winniford boys had a band of sorts and played good music for us, fiddled and violined as Miss Becky called the good stuff that young Sam played; they were all good on the bow. That was back in '88 so they got better as I learned when getting back to Texas. Well, we quietly told our predicament about having to leave Winnsboro because of the shoot out in town and all, but those old ladies had already heard the tales. Now, that mother was dead, my brother Bill had inherited most of the fortune; at least she gave him the gold coins ahead of her dying since being sick enough for a time to decide that the end was near and that he must take the money and go west to keep Nimrod Junior safe from the vendetta law in Winnsboro.

Several other Winnsboro families had decided to go west too because of hard times and a need to get away from the shirt tail sheriff. The Wheatley family, Fortenberry, Cornelius family and Taylor brothers, all left in a rather substantial wagon train big enough to protect ourselves from thieves or snoopy lawmen. Brother W. L. had the large fortune in gold coins, Nimrod posed as a laboring woodsman, Ike and myself plus brother Jim went along. We left Cherry Wood to the rest of the Taylors who wanted to stay in safety as they called it.

Leaving the gate at Cherry Wood was an odd feeling to know that I would never again return. Seeing the damaged gate posts and bent wrought iron gate for that last time was hard to do and also a nice thing to know

that all the bad memories would be left behind. That damaged gate always made me think when the yankee army went marching by and kicked rocks and chunks of wood at us; yankee the word always means that scene to me when I read or hear, that expression damn yankee. We had no trouble traveling from Winnaboro to Black Jack Grove; well, the Alexanders and Winnifords told us that a new town with a railroad was set up just ten or twelve miles northwest of them so we could catch a train into Dallas.

Dallas was still our next destination then; I still planned to go to Indian Territory but not everyone planned to go there with me and brother Ike. We all hitched up the next morning early and went to that place called Commerce. It was not a bad little town for such a new place; it already had a store and feed lots for loading cattle for sale when the train stopped to take the cattle to market; it had started as a railhead loading for cattle with the name Cow Hill near the old Sulphur River. Cattle also gathered on the small hill at night to escape the flies or gnats that plagued wild cattle in those days, just like now, too, for that matter. A regular township was built with plank stores so went found the town Commerce without any trouble. My brother W. L. stayed and went into the mercantile business; Nimrod also stayed to run the livery stables connected to the store or to manage the buggy enterprise. Took a lot of work to get started by having to build everything from the ground up so I went on to Indian Territory the next week along with Ike. But old Commerce was settled by a colony of pioneer families from Winnaboro because of a feud and a vendetta shirt tail sheriff. The Wheatley family set up a jewelry store; Dee Wheatley III owns the family business now when I go there to get my watch cleaned.

Indian Territory was not all that I thought it would be after a few years, especially after Jenny died and another kid of mine to take care of. Laura Estelle really had a lot of work to do with her pretty hands; she was no sweet pretty thing any longer and she complained a lot, even more mouthy than her nigger mammy and that's saying a lot. We got back to Texas and on to Commerce where brother Bill sheltered us. Nimrod was glad to see us but everyone seemed to expect us to be rich in gold coin. I guess old dead dear mother had spoiled everyone in the Taylor family by doing so well that we thought golden opportunity just lay around every corner. Ike went into business hauling things; he had a good dray service in no time at all and thus decided to settle down and made no bones saying that I should do the same, now that I had so many kids to feed and clothe and send to school. Well, I told him that I never went beyond the 5th grade and was taught at home by mother to read and write and arithmetic. I knew more than enough for this world's business. Ike reminded me that I was not rich so don't feel so smug about my ignorance; he was like that when he thought he was right, just like my dear old mother on that subject. I decided to stay for a while at least until something better came along; I worked for Ike and brother Bill and on May 28, 1897 another girl Opal was born. I now had to work even harder but Ike did give gifts and candy to the girls, especially Lissy, as I much later was always told by prissy Lissy when she was grown. I also made my own brew from wild Indian peaches that grew in the bottoms and I went fishing and hunting. I taught my boys to hunt and fish like a good woodsman and guide in case they ever just wanted to take off and see the world like I had done. But they weren't too interested in going places away from the family. I stayed

in and around Commerce until April 17, 1900 when my last child Thomas Melton Taylor was born. Laura Estelle had reunited with all her folks, naming our baby child for her sister Sally's husband. They all visited several times a year and seemed glad that we were not doing so well in Commerce as when back in Winnsboro. I did make a few fast trips back to Indian country; Oklahoma was beckoning to folks from Black Jack Grove; the Landtroop family went so I took them since I knew the way like an Indian guide. The Landtroop family had originally come from Florence, Alabama in late 1889 to Black Jack Grove with their relatives Jim Ellis and Stewart Wilson's children. They all already had kinsmen near Dallas in Ellis County. All of them were hard working folks who weren't afraid of what had to get done. For quality folks, they had no niggers around them but had owned several during the war (I had to stop saying the war because another war had happened down in Cuba). John Landtroop and his wife Nancy Ellis Landtroop took their children, all grown, with them. Jim Ellis was a sickly brother with consumption that was hereditary and Collins Wilson was a cousin because they were all kin through their dead grandmother Edna Herston Ellis. When she died, they all packed up from Florence, Alabama to go west much like we Taylors went look, stock and barrel from Cherry Wood when our dear old mother died so we had a lot in common plus being descended from Scotch Irish folks. All the Ellis and Stewart Wilson folks had founded Florence back in 1820, after the war of 1812 soldiers died to give their young children a small start, since Edna Herston and her brother Robert Herston had a small savings from their dad; Edna Herston married Templeton Ellis and had a housefull of children who mostly went west eventually. John Ellis stayed at the Florence homestead and bought out the landed interest of all the other brothers and sisters and cousins so they had sufficient cash to get a good grub steak in their new land. You really got to know folks when you travelled and then camped out with them for weeks at a time on a long trip like to Indian country. And then some of them went back and forth a lot from Oklahoma back to Black Jack Grove because they still had some relatives about and that family was close as any of us Taylors ever dared to be.

I got to wheres that I felt kin to some of those Landtroop folks; Tom and Luther were two big brothers who could work better than a dozen buck niggers put together. I never saw such smart men work so hard and then save their money. Both young men saved and worked to get a very good start to own thousands of acres of land. Tom Landtroop went to help pioneer Plainview, Texas, for I saw him out there when working in the oil fields once. But I am getting ahead of my story again.

On one of my trips back and forth to Indian country, I saw and met Frank James. He even taught school at Horton, Texas near Commerce about 3 or 4 miles east of town--it is just a farm community with a school and a church, no town square and shops like Commerce. I saw Frank James when I first went to the newtown of Commerce; he went to Commerce to buy his supplies and I recognized his picture from articles that mother had got to read about; she always had folks sending newspapers from everywhere to her for reading. Anyway, Frank James had several of his men still banded just across the border in Indian country, over the Red River in safety from the Texas Rangers even. The James gang stayed in caves that gave a

good lookout vantage point so that no lawmen or bounty head hunter could sneak up on them because the brother Jesse James was not dead and thus had to hide out and they had all assumed another name of course. I am sure that I also saw Jesse James at Horton, Texas while Frank was there. Texas people did not care what anyone did as long as minding their own business and not bothering the everyday routine of the hard working folks who themselves wanted a chance to get by without a hassel. Besides, the law had very little respect from most Southerners because of the harsh Reconstruction actions; all the carpathangers and scalawags had gained control of the state governments and used laws to foreclose on over due land tax payments and just about any infraction of the letter of the law that could be imagined. Jesse James was a Robin Hood to us Southerners; his Confederate bushwhackers with William Quantrill were a welcome force against the Union Regulators during the big bad war against Jayhawkers. We used to hear the song very often about the coward who shot Mr. Howard. Howard was a name that Jesse James used as an alias; he assumed several names but used Howard the most. Robert Ford and his brother Charles were also in the band of train robbers so it was easy for them to shoot poor ole Jesse James who apparently outsmarted them by pretending dead and going west to start over. Trains were another big business meanness to the average land owner; they took their right of way when anyone did not want to sell; they beat poor folks up and made them sign away the land or so everyone said back then. The railroad line made Commerce the town it was so nobody here could understand why they were a hated business at so many places but the robber barons owned them and operated them with a high handed business approach just like old King George III did over his subjects. Also, the Federal government was owned and controlled by the robber baron republican party all the years after the War Between the States except for Grover Cleveland and his two terms, separated apart from each other; he was the last of the aristocracy of the old school like in the South; he was a democrat who did not use the laws and idea of freedom so that big business could rob the people of public lands and banking foreclosures; the bank panics were a good way to get control legal and all of hard working people's farms or businesses--government was to practice a laissez faire attitude as long as the robber barons could use that line of reasoning on the illiterate masses who fell for their act. That's why I liked to leave the country into Indian Territory to get away from the robber barons who owned American government that was laughingly of the people, by the people and for the people-- all, if you had many millions of dollars and owned big banks and big railroads. The sorry mess or terrible state of affairs of the government was enough to make the everyday Southerner sick to death so it is no wonder that Jesse James was a Robin Hood here and did not get turned in by the common citizen-- that was just one way we could get back at the mean old yankee troops and money grubbing northern controlled government of the United States. I was prepared to return to Indian Territory when the Spanish American War broke out; no way was I going to fight for yankees so they could lived well off my hard labor or even kill me while fighting their battles just to get richer than everyone else in their social set; a lot of money is not near enough for them; they have got to have the biggest fortune and it had better be an older one than their friendly enemies who attend their old smoker's clubs. Frank James had my admiration; some folks said that Cole Younger and his outlaws were also holed up in a cave with Jesse but I never knew the Younger outlaws by face.

Jesse James was a sign of the times in the lead of the great rebellion. He was a product of politics that make laws which in turn make lawbreakers just like the British taxed our ancestors to death. There's a dead nigger in the woodpile somewhere about the killing of Jesse James hoax. Some hidden reasons and strange methods have been at force in this country for a long time by the rising bourgeois class and their proletarian workers; the captains of industry or robber barons came from the sloven industrial workers who had no descent from the aristocracy. The cavaliers were the last sons of dukes and noble families who had to come to colonial America to find any opportunity since the title and all property went to the eldest son; the state's rights South was governed by the leisure landed gentry whose ancestry was tied to the royal households in Scotland and Ireland so the damn yankee proletariat who finally owned a factory had to gain control of Washington; they even lied to name their Republican party the Grand Old Party when in reality the Democrat party was founded by Jefferson and enhanced by Jackson. A lie is believed by illiterate voters; unemployment has been twenty five percent under the robber barons but at least the western lands are open for the poor to go there to survive. I guess that I have become as hard as nails like my mean old dead mother about the rich yankee politicians.

Reading newspapers to get the facts would put the vested interest robber barons out of business or so I hope; I try to read a Democrat newspaper and then a Republican paper since each can print the news in a total different way, just like reading the Bible with Satan saying the lines one way and the Gabriel Angel saying the same lines but with more emphasis. But preachers now want to boss folks on how to live; they are now saying that demon rum is evil and that home brew is the worst sin of all when once even preachers brewed their own stuff at home just like all the folks. One preacher who believed that God made the whole world and even named everyone yet unborn on that same day because predestination was the order of the universe went with me to Oklahoma back in the 80's. When we were crossing the Red River, his wagon got into quicksand and was fast going under with oxen and all. I always cussed the animals to make them pull harder and faster and along the way the goodie two shoes of a preacher man enjoyed telling me how evil and wicked I was; he was one of those hell fire damnation self-righteous fools who liked to make himself look good by saying bad things about other people. Well, his old wagon started sinking fast. And then he had the nerve the yell in desperation to me, "George, cuss'em; beat their rears so we won't lose all her household goods, please George, cuss'em good." I replied that his God of predestination should be called upon to save him, for what will be will be forever." Oh, that godly man pleaded with me and I finally took compassion on his poor wife and beat the hell out of those beasts of burden and sure enough a few curt words of cussing got them to moving. A few choice cuss words really make the beasts to get going as any experienced guide will tell you. I never had any more trouble with that preacher man again; he knew that he would have lost all his worldly goods if I had not cussed the fear of hell into those beasts of his; he was one of those anabaptist zealots who were once not allowed in America except in Rhode Island where there oldball religion was not permitted to spread. Their preachers always want to interpret the scriptures to fit the times just like the Roman Catholic priesthood did to cause the reformation period and thus the breakaway that permitted that zealot even to exist as a religion, yet he hates all papists who are the real Christian religion since they were the only church for fifteen centuries. Commerce now had religion like an old lady about to go meet her maker and must convert everyone first.

Commerce was getting citified enough that the preachers were telling folks how to live and how to vote even; Commerce was a young place to get civilized so fast but then the new college that brother Bill Taylor helped entice from Cooper helped. The Mayo Normal School taught teachers mainly when it was established in 1894 near land that brother Bill owned and close to his house on Washington Street. Professor Mayo was a hard working man who tended a garden and had a student work with him while being instructed verbally and also working at the same time; discussion and work went hand in hand there. Ideas did get discussed in the town but most of the talking had to do about gossip on other townsfolk. And the new preachers seemed to think that they were the only ones who talked to God who in turn tells exactly the only right way to live a daily life; God was a noisy busybody full of gossip just like the folks in town. Those new preachers taught that God rewarded hard work with wealth and that a rich man was more beloved by God than a bum or at least that was the lesson that their actions presented most of the time. I told one preacher that God must be a republican since the robber barons were now in charge since the great rebellion attempt had failed and that democrats were satan's children; that did not set well in the solid South belt. I said that I did not think God was a goddamned republican during these hellish years after the great rebellion failure so I had to put a stop to hearing the religious gibberish justification of all things. I was tired of hearing verbal garbage from the uneducated preachers who could not themselves even read the good book that they worshipped so much. I was fortunately educated at home by my smart mother mostly to read well and fast but she was a real brain when most people could not even read or write so how could most people expect to get an education since their homefolks could not help them. We Taylors came from good stock who had privilege and rank behind us to provide the best of what life had to offer at the time; our aristocracy always got the best opportunity to learn more by being well enough educated in the best of what life had to offer in that day. My day was not a bad time to be alive because of the wilderness to get away from the lying that these preacher types had to offer and thus to get far away from the lies of politicians not at all interested in the common citizen anymore if they did say otherwise. Money was the real aim of the good mouthing leadership now.

Commerce now had a church for most of the religions, even brother Bill had helped found the Presbyterian Church there; he chose to remain a true Scotchman to the end. So many churches were built on one street that it was named Church Street appropriately enough. Folks now had to vote the selfrighteous way the big preachers said or they would go to hell since their God told them what to do every day, personally. History repeated itself with the Divine Right like the Stuart kings of England tried and got their head cut off when finally going too far. Deism was what the founding fathers really believed or we would have had a national religion; the puritan element was full of hatred for life and used superstition to explain all the real facts away to suit their small minded needs. Most of the different churches said they were the only one or the only way to get to heaven and that all the others were dead wrong; the religions fought each other like old scratch himself; they argued using scripture to quote their religious bias. Prejudice was the order of business for the loud preachers who seemed to battle for the biggest membership roll call because membership meant wealth of tithes for the church. The Baptists sure enough hated the Catholic papists in open preaching warfare; the Methodist

were divided between their Episcopal origins and their Freewill Methodist fundamentalists who shouted in unknown tongues the words of God as they fell from heaven. And the Church of Christ condemned all the other religions to hell for being totally wrong. Goodness and love did not find its way into God's kingdom of earthly churches. I sure would have joined a Quaker Church if one had been around then because they at least met to quietly meditate and never had loud protestations about every act being a mortal sin that everyone did--the quiet services appealed to me. Small towns know all the favorite sins of everyone else so being sanctimonious as all get out was just a waste of time besides being a hypocrit which was also a sin if they had bothered to read the Bible they worshipped so much than listen to their favorite preacher who catered to the prosperous deacons and elders who paid their salary. Being rich sure got favors from the preachers who then didn't preach them to hell like a bum would get condemned; it was suddenly fashionable to be rich and thus God had rewarded hard work with their earthly wealth, yet the infallible Bible said it was easier for a rich man to go through the eye of a needle than to enter into the kingdom of God's pearly gates. I laughed at all the stupidity committed seriously as the only right way to think. Well churched rich folks could do bad things to good people of another church membership and that was fine according to their small minded ways. I soon fell out of favor with the preachers and the high fallutin membership with their false good manners. I left Commerce for good in 1902, never to return I then thought, except later to come back to visit my children or when they got married. Laura Estelle was too much of the goodie two shoes type for me now as well as her nigger mamie who was far worse a pain in the back side and then all those Sullivan sisters with their former husbands getting rich selling produce to become almost rich folks themselves. The Sullivans never had taken kindly to being poor after Henderson lost the place named Grasslands and went to Sulphur Springs to live and raise his daughters to be old maids. I left early one morning.

Commerce had become all the things that old Winnstboro had been. People wanted to boss other folks through gossip and the sanctimonious use of religion. Religion was a big fight between each faction; even singing and music became a battle ground. The use of instruments was a big bone of contention and I had always liked a good sing song.

A good old fashioned dance had become sinful even. Square dancing was fast movement but the touching made the puritans angry so it all had to be stopped. The monthly fiddling sessions on the square did not end but did get changed. The Winniford boys had a band; Norvelle was a good one to play oldtime breakdowns on his fiddle; Sam played the high fallutin violin and young Bob handled the big bass fiddle. They were good churched folks from the best of local gentry so they could do no wrong.

I left Commerce to become a roustabout. I knew carpentry work fairly well because I had built enough dugouts in Oklahoma to shake a stick at. Anyway, I got good steady work in the new oil fields building those big wooden derricks. I went down to Beaumont to find work and sure enough did get a job right off.

The noise and smell nearly killed me; people moved about all the time never all the camps sleeping at the same time. Horses went around on the loose a lot; the muddy streets were full of horse manure and stuff.

The smell was enough to kill anyone used to the wide open spaces like I was. Man can get accustomed to anything eventually so I had to just get busy and forget the bad part while I worked to earn a living so that I would not have to be nagged at by my wife and her nigger mammy. Once a new well came in that spewed oil way up into the air; man it was a pretty sight to behold spraying until the wind changed and then it rained down oil on us all. I felt like a tarred and feathered nigger I saw one time being rode out of town on a rail. Never again did I watch a oil well spew without first following the wind to avoid another oil bath. Took weeks to get all that smell and greasy mess off my skin, just shaved my head to get rid of the gunk there, at least. I also made my home brew to sell or share with the other fellow workers. So I was busy all the time, either with carpentry or abrewing. Our work camps or boom towns were a world unto themselves. Fights were a regular thing when the guys got off their shifts to relax as it were; they were all kinds of people; I worked with niggers as cooks for the camps, too. We all got along as well as good be expected because we all had a job to do and were too tired most of the time to bother with differences until some smart aleck started jawboning about the big war days of the Confederacy or old Indian wars or over women. Women caused the biggest fights because they were so few of them and the tough fellas thought they owned special favors from the few around. A lot of flouzes followed the camps or boom towns. Some of the gals even married their johns or clientele. For all the money being made from the oil wealth, the boom towns were hell holes of terrible living conditions--seemed odd that so much big new rich folks could come out of all that squallor. The landowners became rick and for once I saw that my old dear dead mother was right about land being wealth and power--little did she know about mineral rights and oil royalties. But maybe she did since she read so much and was Pennsylvania where the first oil well was discovered. Mother said never to sell any land and to think that I did sell to the other Taylors who stayed at Cherry Wood. All I had to show for my inheritance was the old iron bed that I got--the one that daddy died on and then mother immediately laid down to have me during the War. And that bed was not even with me anymore; it was still in Commerce with Laura Estelle.

I had said just before leaving that I would return to get the baby boy Tom, that I should have at least one of the youngins. That really scared Laura Estelle enough to leave me alone for a while. And that threat really put the fear into nigger Mammy as well. And little Tom always thought that I would return for him and take him with me; he said when grown that he thus thought that I must have really loved him after all. But I would never have had a place to keep him in those filthy camp towns which were no place for a youngin.

I did return to Commerce when my eldest Will married Ida Salmon in 1906. The Salmon family was good stock since Hattie Salmon had married Ira Knight who owned land with a big house with a drawing room and all. The wedding was held at the Knight place East of town, just off the railroad tracks that nearly came to their door. They had niggers to do all the work. For a new town, Commerce had a big nigger population that resided in what was called The Holler because the negroes sang so loud while they did their work and they yelled so loud during their church meetings.

Will and Ida Taylor had their first child a year later, named her Elsie, born February 18, 1907. Seemed odd for me to be a grandfather.

Poor old Laura Estelle looked like a grandmother, old before her time from all the hard work and worry with a hard tongue to match her looks, now. I did not look much better in my overalls and dirty shirts from the oil stains. My skin had an oily black look most of the time and that made me look more like a nigger than not. I just blended in with all the other workmen. Mother would never have recognized me or have accepted such things. I had once thought that I had left Wainsboro and Cherry Wood long behind but my memories often returned to those days, even though I never went back there to see anyone or anything again.

Every two or three years I would return to Commerce to see yet another grandchild being born; Will and Ida had 4 youngins close to gether. Seemed that one was always in diapers all the time. Lissie married Bub Love and had a passel of youngins; she met Bub when a train came through; he was an engineer; they too had one kid after another.

Lissie was like her mother to nag about being poor; guess she heard it from Laura Estelle all the time plus from her aunties on their farms, with their high fallutin ways. After her mother died in 1943, Lissie told me that she knew I never really loved her or even had to because I was not her real daddy; Lissie said that her Uncle Ike and Jenny were her true parents and that Laura Estelle and I claimed parentage since her true mother died in child birth and we already had children to raise. I denied her story saying that the bloodline and name would be the same anyway. She gritted her teeth and told me that her daddy was the one who let her ride in his dray wagon when I went off to the roustabout ways. Lissie never let up about that idea of hers and I just left.

Lissie had a hard life too just like her mother; her last set of twins were born when her husband Bub Love was killed in a train wreck. But she got a ten thousand dollar cash settlement and then went to Houston to live, and raise her brood of hard working children.

My son Guy married Beulah Thornton. Guy was a tailor by trade and went to Lubbock where he died of a lung condition some said. I never visited out there. I did try to attend the wedding.

Dude married into the Evans family; Ethel Evans's mother was an Indian with money. Evans family owned a gin and rent houses at Commerce. Ethel was friendly and a big religious woman; she was a preacher with the Seventh Day Adventist. Ethel was a big woman; twice or three times the size of Dude. Dude had been born in Indian Territory so he was rough as a boot to take care of himself. They had as many children as Lissie. When Ethel and Dude went anywhere in their car full of kids, the car touched the ground almost and when hitting a hole broke an axel. Ethel could hoist a car up and pull an axel better than a man when she wanted to go somewhere, yet she was always sick and laid in bed unable to do the housework but could change an axel when wanting to go somewhere.

Opal married Paul Mackey and only ever had one child, Loretta who married a rich oil man. Opal always had ambition and was smart just like my mother. When bad times first started, ole Mackey left Opal with her little girl to raise. Opal went to Houston to work as a waitress so she could get leftover food to take home. She worked at Simpson's Diner in Houston. A farmer in overalls came in for breakfast most every day and finally in 1936, the man Victor Shaubarger throw down a long

legal document which had the name Opal Mae Taylor Mackey at the top; some detective had compiled an accounting of her life, even mentioning the little girl Loretta. Vic was a man of few words and said, "Miss Opal I have a little boy at home who needs some mothering with a woman at home just like your little girl needs you at home, so let us go get married now." Opal blinker her eyes during those depression days and replied, "You're the best tip I have had all day; let's go to the justice of the peace." They left and got married. Victor Shamburger owned hundreds of acres of land at Hardin on the edge of the Big Thicket; he owned a saw mill, herds of cattle and raised corn, plus was sheriff of Liberty County there. Opal did very well indeed; she became a big club woman and worked with the Woodman of the World Circle Insurance and old folks homes; she became an officer on the state level.

My youngest Tom married Ella Winniford near Cumby or old Black Jack Grove in December 13, 1924. Ella's father was Robert Lee Winniford who had been a part of the Winniford band so popular in Commerce and other communities in the central part of East Texas. Her uncle Sam Winniford was a renowned musician who was acknowledged as the best fiddler in the state of Texas. Ella had grown up on the landrond homeplace northwest of Cumby or old Black Jack Grove. Her home was the place where all of us Taylors and folks from Winnsboro had stayed overnight on our way west to take Nimrod away from that shirt tail sheriff of Winnsboro. Ella's grandmother Sarah Alexander Winniford was a sister to the old maid Rebecca Alexander who gave us directions to the new town of Commerce where we could board a train to go to Dallas and then on west but nearly everyone in the wagon train stayed in Commerce. I went to some of the Easter Egg hunts at the Winniford place since the whole community was invited; dozens of relatives from Dallas also came; Dr. Charles T. Alexander was a Baptist minister who was a first cousin to Bob Winniford. I just never talked religion.

Also, my granddaughter Elsie Taylor married Everett Winniford who was a brother to Ella, in 1925. Little Ida Margaret Winniford and little Lynna Estelle Taylor were both first and second cousins who lived and played together the first few years of their lives. Elsie though was very jealous of all the gifts and would check on the prices to see if more was spent on Lynna E. Elsie seemed to think that having the name Winniford entitled her child to more presents. And Elsie would correct anyone who misspelled the name Winniford; she was determined to have the elegance of that name done right in every detail of the word--would really embarrass me to be with her when she corrected someone. Elsie had only one child but did not raise little Ida Margaret. The grandmother Ida Salmon Taylor raised the child; took charge and even sent her to school, saying that living in the country was not good enough for her grandchild. Yet, the lovely old homeplace named Winniford Way was very elegant and full of prosperity because of the hard working folks there. Ida always made snide remarks about living in the country, yet her own sister Hattie Knightlived in the country in a big house which burned to the ground one day and then had to live in the nigger quarters because they were not so rich after enough to rebuilt in grand style as before. Ida had a few words of crow to eat then. But she never admitted it to anyone. I lived with the women so I know what happened.

I came to live with Ida and Will Taylor on Labor Day in 1932. I was sick and down and out as Ida so often said to my face. I had been working

as a roustabout at Graham, Texas out there when I was sick from being physically run down; a friend wrote Tom Taylor and son Will that I was unable to work anymore; one of their railroad friends had been through there. Well, Will said he could not get off from his breakman job so Tom was laid off because of the depression and had the time free to go get me. He and his wife Ella came in their car and took me back to Commerce on Labor Day of 1932. I lived with Will till Christmas of 1935; Ida always threw it up in my face and in Tom's face that he just went to get and bring me back for her to wait on. Will did stand up for Tom by saying a friend's letter indicated that their daddy was sick and that family should take care of their own. Ida grew up with folks who did not come from the land; they grew up along side the railroad workers life and were townfolks who did not have the love of the freedom of outdoors or wilderness in their blood like the settlers had; I was a dying breed, a left over from the old days that had no place in the modern world of machines. Commerce was a railroad town and the depression had really hurt the jobs, like young Tom having no work or prospects; but his in-laws were still on the land like true gentry and could help him and his children. Ida blamed all her husband's bad traits on me; I was the scapegoat for everything bad she saw in Will; the other daughter in laws said pretty bad things like that about me, even though they did have me over for meals because of being their Christian duty to care for me.

I went out to the country with Tom to his in-laws. Ella's mother was Margaret Landtroop Winniford and therefore her parents and brothers Tom and Luther Landtroop had been the folks that I showed the way to Oklahoma Territory. And their kinsmen Jim Ellis had also gone to Oklahoma then to become the settlers of the new state; they had businesses in Soper, Oklahoma. The whole Landtroop and Ellis kin came back two or three times a year to visit at Winniford Way. Easter was a big thing out there. Tom had met Ella on Easter when she was engaged already to wed another man Tom Drake who was twice her age then; but Tom gained her attention that day and married in December of 1924. I never saw another Landtroop kinsmen named Charley Butler who asked Tom about the Jesse James story being at Horton and also in a cave in Oklahoma; I told Tom what I knew to relate to Charley Butler. Tom had a keen memory because he taught masonry through the Commerce Masonic Lodge. Tom was a Scottish Rite route expert; his roots to Scotland came through loud and clear. Tom was presented with a scenic pictorial certificate which was 3 feet by 2 feet and made a very nice framed wall piece. Tom could remember every word exactly as he was told about anything.

Tom said that he told Charley Butler exactly what I knew. The Landtroop brothers Luther and Tom had a real bad quarrel according to my son Tom. Those Landtroops worked the same Mexicans on their land so they conducted business most every day without every speaking; they had not spoken in decades yet conducted daily business with their farm land workers. Tom Landtroop's wife Nora had to repeat every word of a needed contract with each one standing there pretending not to see the other. Those brothers even were seated across the table at Christmas and still never spoke or acknowledged each other's existence; at least they got to see all the relatives and keep family ties going.

Also, Luther Landtroop raised an Indian princess named Lena Rivers.

The Indian girl inherited a fortune in oil royalties and then went to Paris, France to drink herself to death or die from the good life as all the relatives liked to say. Luther's wife Irene Seals Landtroop had bossed the gal to death and insulted her redman heritage until the money came, but the Indian girl wisely left the country all together. I don't blame her.

Poor Lena Rivers was too often used as a good example of a bad person who died from the evil drink. Commerce certainly had no liquor to worry about. After the ladies bashed up the saloons in 1891 with their hatchets; the idea came from what Mrs. Sarah Winniford had done to all the saloons in Black Jack Grove, to clean up that awful rowdy drunken stop on the way from Jefferson to Dallas; business fell off from then on as far as I was concerned. Commerce got around the dry spell by having a domino place or pool hall; my brother Jim Taylor owned the domino hall, even had domino games going all day. And one could get a little drop there too when the bootleggers came along with a bottle from someother town. Ike and I were standing near his draw wagon when Tom was about six when Will got married; anyway, we took a dram just as little Tom was walking up; I had said that I wanted to see the little dog that Ike had in his wagon so we had gone for the drink of course. But boy like, little Tom wanted to see if a doggie really existed so he had followed for sure; when we took a quick swig, the boy came upon us so I swallowed hard and strangled nearly to death while saying that a little hair of the dog just got me. Tom thought the dog had run away--we had a big laugh at his expense I guess. I was always a welcome sight to old timers in Commerce because I always brought a jar of houch to pass around. The do gooders called me a bootlegger because calling me bad names made them feel good and self righteous at their new churches. I could always just leave the next day, but their husbands sure liked a swig of the good stuff since Commerce was dry.

These citified born again christians have to watch everyone else's sinful ways to make themselves feel suprior over to others like me as a good Sunday school lesson in scandal. Preachers even like to meet at the city cafe and discuss the worst sin of the week over a steaming cup of coffee. Somesight to behold when I got old and set around town hearing all the things the idle workshop of their christian minds did to other nice people no worse than themselves; no wonder Hitler could do so well when he knows human nature wants to demean someone real bad to lay all the blame on an innocent person. Well, gossip is the mainstay of the churchy folks; the religious old timers who settled this country were too busy working and praying their own silent words to God to meddle under the guise of setting a true christian example to be a real publican, for the Bible tells us to pray in our closet quietly, not a words is said about loud protest before congregations to praise our public face. Confession of sins to a preacher is a mistake if wanting to keep a secret. I should know.

But we Taylors can keep a secret just like my brother Ike never telling details of Jenny's death because none of us could bare to talk about it and thus bring up old memories for ourselves and too we had promised not to say a word. And our word was our bond, too. We Taylors also keep a good secret about Nimrod, never to mention his name to anyone in this gossipy town called Commerce. We kept his secret identity from everyone, even though Nimrod looked just like the rest of us since Taylors

all favor just like a Hereford bull makes all the cattle favor him, that's the way us Taylors look alike once you have seen one, then all of us look that much alike. Brother Bill or old W. J. Taylor to the townsfolk had done a good job taking care of Nimrod Junior and keeping him safe from the arm of the law that would have hanged him for getting justice on the murderers of his father; mother would have been proud of us all about keeping that promise. But brother Bill died about the time that old Ida got on a tere and moved me in on Tom and his small new baby at Christmas time. Ida always got her ass in the air around Christmas when all her folks would be at her house, so she wanted me out of the way for good I know but especially during the celebrations of Jesus's birthday when all her Salmon kin would be there to eat those sumptuous meals. So, I was moved in on Tom and Ella and Little Lynna Estelle and baby Bobby while Will was away on a run, being a brakeman took him a hundred miles down the tracks each day and back; I always wished that I could get on a train and just go too. My good brother Bill died then or abouts so no one was able to take care of Nimrod; that was 1935 I am pretty sure. There was still a stash of cash left to take care of Nimrod Junior so he got that money to go somewhere else. Brother W. J. had a big going business for Nimrod to help all those years since coming to Commerce. Nimrod ran the buggy or livery part of the mercantile business; he took care of the daytime hours out back of the main store and then after the closing hours Nimrod cleaned up the place and had a room over the horse stables; I had helped build those quarters long ago. Nimrod never complained and the good lord kept our secret because we had right on our side.

Just after the great crash on wall street Terza Sullivan and her sister Sally visited my folks who of course were here as well. Dude had them at his place or the house that old man Evans had give them; old man Evans and his brother had married sisters who were Indians so they had money. Anyway Dude let his old maid aunts visited for a few weeks like folks did and sometimes stayed never to go back home. Their father Henderson was dead and he had raised them so strick they were both old maids. But Miss Sally Sullivan met Joe Mangrum who had a nice place just east of Commerce and was from an original settler of Commerce town so they got married very late in life. And Miss Terza just moved in and lived with them till Sally died and she stayed on even then to cook for old Joe; Joe and Sally were married about ten years; Sally died just as the depression was getting over with and about the time that Hitler was coming to world power. I remember events at Commerce with what I read in the newspaper; I read the Dallas Morning News every day from cover to cover, that kept me out of the way of the women folk. I also saved the big stack of papers to burn in my wood burning stock during the cold weather along with the sticks of wood and coal that I picked up along the railroad right of way; coal burners were a big thing then. Terza then suddenly got a job taking care of an old man in Greenville which a big county seat town and I never again heard of her because after that she had enough money to go her own way for the first time in her life and she did leave but seems odd for such a family loving person to just up and never be heard of again. When my brother Bill died, Nimrod had to leave and he had some cash I know for I saw him pay cash for a train ticket to Greenville. He never came back to stay in Commerce; he worked in the cotton gins over there where the largest compress in the world was as the train station signs said "The Whitest People and the Blackest Land." That place was cotton country like Cherry Wood had been so he felt at home

again I am sure; the buzz of work there reminded me of the old home once when I took a train and stayed the whole day there away from old Ida and her long tongue. I could get on a train because all the conductors knew me well and would let me ride since I had 3 sons working for the railroad and they liked my boys. They always seemed to like me as I would bring a bottle or two of the good stuff back to pass around.

Joe Mangrum's sister took Terza to Greenville to get a job taking care of an old sick man who had the money to pay her to care for him; Terza did tell me that someone had to work in the family and do their duty as well; Terza had always come over to Cherry Wood as a youngin to visit for several days at a time so she knew us Taylors well and seemed to like us till after I came back from Oklahoma when Jenny died and poor Laura Estelle was all broken down and looked old before her time. I got blamed for everything bad that ever happened; Ike did not get so much blame since he had a dray service and gave them all rides places and some money too. I never let other people boss me once mother was gone. Life is too short to katow to others, except when Mis Ida gets on a tare. You have to obey and just get out of the way. Terza took care of poor old Nimrod which was like the blind leading the blind for she too was an old woman but in good health like all of the old settlers being of good sturdy stock. Terza is bound to have gotten the stash of money that Nimrod had left over when brother Bill died; she could then well afford to go her own way. I sure would have done that. But everyone else in Commerce says Terza was taken advantage by someone who wanted her to keep house for them; Terza had a lot of old first edition books from her old homelace Grasslands so that is why someone kept her death a secret so as to get the collection of books; I say no; no one would know how or where to get such cash for old dusty books and I never read about any rare books being cashed in or the Dallas News would have printed such a story. I am sure that I am right about Nimrod because he was in good enough health and smart when brother Bill died, and Terza would never just go off to some complete stranger to word and live in a strangers house. Just like all us went west to stop only at places where we knew folks, like at Black Jack Grove to ask the Alexanders and Winnifords about things because old timers prided themselves on taking the word of someone they knew well enough to trust before going to a total unknown place if you were respectable back then. And all the Taylors and Sullivans were very respectable folks so they gallivanting off to a strangers house to nurse maid just any old man. I know the old folks only too well.

I ended up living back with Will and Ida because when Will got back from his daily run and I was gone, he came a hunting me up and took me back to my room. I had built that room onto where the garage had been. And then I built a new garage for Will's car. My room was a breezeway as Ida called it. I had a flu so that a wood burning stove could be used and thus newspapers could be burned along with sticks and coal that I gathered along the way. Ida had natural gas stoves but was stingy with the fuel bill as she said it cost too much to use very long at a time but her part of the house was snug I always noticed; she would take my lunch pplate to leave on my bedside table because she knew that I wanted to read the news as she called the Dallas paper. I never quibbled because we had a co-existent way of life after that tare of hers for a long time. I of course put in a big garden enough for ten people and raised a hog every year that I butchered myself; Ida had scraps left over enough everyday to feed an army but she only throwed them away since she had growed up not having the refrigerator to save food so she wasn't in the the habit of keeping food from day to day like the modern women were now doing. But

Mis Ida had a fancy new fridge as she called it and she did keep lots of things in it, but not big amounts of meals from day to day. Anyway I fed the hog from the daily discards with water added; a couple gallons of water to a half full 5 gallon can; an old roofing tar container used to was the slop to the pig and then to the shoot and then the full grown hog ready to butcher. They liked the fresh pork and the vegetables; relatives canned a lot of them; I had peach trees too but no making any brew from them like back at Cherry Wood. But I did get to buy some good stuff when going on the rails to get away from Ida.

Ida was a holy terror when she didn't get her way easily, but she usually won. Ida Margaret, her grandbaby, was not easy to manage yet little Ida as I called her studied hard and made good grades, even when in college at old Mayo's Normal College now named East Texas College for Teachers. Weldon Taylor was a math teacher there; he attended the old Mayo school; his brother Leon was an air force colonel who was a hoot and lots of fun to be around. Nathan was very serious and a good man but not fun like Leon. Ida though could be fun around folks she liked but once anyone had her ire then watch out; she was not fair about things after she was angry about the least thing. And her daughter Elsie was worse but Elsie wanted the good rich life so being elegant was what best suited her.

Little Margaret as I called Ida Margaret to see just what Ida would say was pitiful, never having a chance to be her own person. Ida Margaret finally went to live with her parent when they moved to Amarillo during the war. Ida finally got Everett Winniford off the farm; Ida hated any farm with a passion and called any one on the land a hick and not really intelligent enough to be treated like white folks should be, no matter how fine the house on the land. Ida Margaret met a fly boy out in Amarillo and married him but he was a Catholic. Ida was madder than a wet hen and finally got a divorce. But just as the divorce was final, Ida Margaret was pregnant barely not showing yet. Well, Mis Ida had to be a boss as usual, justifying all by saying no little papist was going to be brought into this world of hers when finding out the day after the divorce decree before known. She had an abortion, got influence from her kinsmen the Knights who knew someone being rich and all to cover up the facts. Little Ida Margaret then could never have any kids after that; she later married Arlan Sporkman who owned land south of town but did not live there of course; his mother was Mrs. McMin who had lots of money according to Ida who knew everything about everyone. Arlan worked for the Internal Revenue Service and was very quiet about things. That silence did not please Ida. I just worked the garden and kept out of the way; Will had bought a double lot behind his house so the big garden took lots of work and then the paper took my nights to read. And when the garden work was laid by or during the winter I rode the rails to keep out of the way; the rails took me much faster than the old wagon days and could go to Dallas and back in the same day; could leave on the passenger morning train and back that evening late; had 2 trains each way every day.

Ida left me alone for a long time; she liked the garden work I did and thus felt that I was worth having around. Ida was an odd cookie as college kids would say; Ida had not originally wanted to buy a house because Will's second wife would get all the benefits when I am dead and gone she would say. She often said that since she did not want another woman to enjoy something she had touched. Ida harped on that a lot.

Ide had liked being of the same last name to Bill Taylor with a big store and then she lived on Jernigan Street named for the founder of Commerce when he moved it from Cow Hill. Money impressed her, just as the Knight Chainey carrying on with niggers in the Holler idid not bother her if rich folks did that, only poor white trash got her acid tongue. Knight Chainey was kin to her sister Hattie Salmon Knight's children so no wrong could be done bythem. Tom Knight was rich in land and the bank so his daughter's kid Knight Chainey was fine; his shit did not stink according to Ide. Also, Ide never missed the annual family reunion that Bill Taylor gave, to show how rich and high and mighty he was.

The Taylor family annual reunion was held in the Greenville city park during July when more could get free. Over twenty five hundred kinsmen attended, with branch water kin like Terza and her sister. Even nigger Mammie went. When Tom took Ella there were 6 Tom Taylors who funned her up when she called for Tom to help her unload the picnic lunch they brought. Everyone brought a big lunch basket to share in case someone did not have any food. Taylors came from all over the state and up in Oklahoma even; folks from Alabama once came. And that's another reason that "Imrod went to Greenville because he knew the place and also knew someone there plus Terza knew him as that old man to nurse maid to; she got his money when he died and just went to Dallas I bet to live the good life; Terza got citified just like all the country gentry from Willsboro did. And too brother Bill's two daughters lived in Greenville; Mary Taylor Wynn was a Taylor through and through to keep a secret if she knew one; her husband Hugh Wynn had a crazy eye. It looked like a glass eye but everyone was too haughty to ask or talk about it and Ide would not tell me anything, if she thought I wanted to know something.

Ide could overlook anything by a rich person if they were nice to her. The Lindley family was one set of rich crooks that had done most everybody wrong over the years yet they owned a big interest in Security Bank. Old John Lindley owned land by the section from St Louis, Missouri to the valley of Texas and he had wild cattle on each section spread along the way; he could camp on his own land each night during the cattle drive back to St. Louis, Missouri where he could get a better price than going to Kansas like most other folks. John Lindley was a screamer because in 1876 he nearly got hanged to death when he visted all the widders around and then stayed late until everyone was dead for sleep because folks got up at sunup back then; when old John Lindley left he took all the cattle in their lots or pins. He did that to the widder Sarah Alexander Winniford but she had 3 sons who grabbed ahold that man and put a noose around his bony neck and strung him to a tree and slowly pulled his neck and feet upward to leave rope burns for the rest of his life; they hanged him till he was nearly dead and told the cattle baron to go to church and not steal no more because not such good Christians next time would catch your yeller hide. I would have done the same thing as a first warning. I believe that the Lindley family has not changed much, judging from the John Lindley IV who owns the bank and fleeces everyone he can; he is too stingy to own a car and thus walks to town from his country home; he used bailing wire for his shoe laces to save money and wears overalls to the bank; he had rather have his money in cows that in turn birth new valuable calves rather buy a car that eats gas and depreciates in value every day. One day a man who borrowed money to buy a car at his bank did not pick him up so the old geezer just foreclosed on his house and car and all as a real meanness to show his power. Ide's friend Miz George was a Lindley so naturally the Lindley badness was alright since they were friends.

The Lindley badness was well known by all folks around because they lived among us all like respectable folks since owning such large tracts of land and banks with big cash reserves plus being characters, the likes of which no one could match. The Lindley gang were a branch water kin to Ida's daughter Elsie. One of the banker Lindley's many daughters also married Walter Callan and their son James married Mamie Alexander.

Mamie Alexander's dad was Kyle whose grandmother Smith was a Winniford from Dallas County prior to 1849 gold rush wagon train that her brother Horvelle Winniford organized from Dallas to California. Well, Tom Alexander was a son of Urbane Alexander who was a magistrate during the Republic of Texas days and thus headrighted the landgrant where I had camped when first on the way to the west to keep Nimrod Junior from being hanged by that shirttail sheriff in Winnboro; Miss Becky Alexander was a sister to Tom Alexander and then her own sister Sarah married a Winniford in 1860; a brother and sister married a brother and sister so all their children were first double cousins. Anyway, Kyle's father Tom was a good man and close to his family. Well, Mamie Alexander Callan was a school teacher like her mother Lodie Bruce Alexander, or at least they got jobs during the big WWII world because of a shortage of teachers. Anyway, the old man Lindley would not leave any land or cash to any descendant of his who owed money or so he liked to brag was the way his will read.

The whole Lindley clan was stingy, for money stuck to their fingers like molasses or taffey candy. No true Lindley every added sugar to his coffee or tea even when drinking a beverage free at a friend's house because they were afraid that they would then get in the habit of drinking the sweetened stuff and thus have to waste money to buy sugar in a grocery store that would just make someone else rich. And then ~~what~~ the old Lindley mansion burned out in the country near Ridgeway, Texas the old skinflint just moved into one of the nigger houses and lived there the rest of his life; said that all his money could not buy back the big house with all its old memories and fine antiques so then why try to restore what could never be done--no use to try and waste good money that could be better used to buy cattle that would have calves that would just double in value every year. The rich old man lived like a nigger the last half of his life. All that money did the old conservative skinflint any real good after all. Well, my son Tom had married into all that local gentry when Ella Winniford tied the knot along with Elsie Taylor marrying her brother Everett Winniford. The Winniford family lived well at their old homestead named Winniford Way. Violin or fiddlin breakdowns were the entertainment. Dancing was not a big thing because all the preachers had decided that God hated all that close touching and hugging that was so typical during a dance unless it was square dancing. Sam Winniford was the only one of the three brothers who continued after the Winniford brothers band quit after the turn of the century. Sam became renowned as the best fiddler in Texas for decades and he taught some famous students. All the kin liked to gather back at the old country homeplace to enjoy the music, even Dr. Charles T. Alexander of Dallas Grande Avenue Baptist Church fame came for the solitude back to where he had also grown up. Dr. Charles had a son Paul who married Mary Lou Whitley whose father was president of East Texas State College. The high and the mighty seemed to gather there so I just got lost in the crowd.

Lots of branch water kin came but my dear old Laura Estelle was never there at Winniford Way when I went. She avoided me like the plague and lived with Lissie Love down in Houston but visited around during the year with all our children who shuffled me around to avoid seeing her; she had the curse of a memory about everything back in the old days that had been

bad. Laura Estelle blamed everything bad as being my fault. I had thus squandered a fortune, but never one word about her brother Anderson who sold her inheritance and she would not sue before the statue of limitation was up. She did not want a Sullivan ever to go to jail so she should have understood why all the Taylors protected Nimrod Junior and thus gave up making a bigger fortune with all the gold coins and federal dollars that mother left us for that expressed purpose. But no, Laura Estelle had to blame me for all the wrongs; she just went to those high falutin churches that have preachers who make their work easy and more valuable by telling folks what to believe about all things not mentioned in the Bible that they worship as God's word until they have a vision that says to do otherwise. It is always easy as pie to blame another time and another place as being bad that caused the misery today rather than taking responsibility for what is now happening. Naggers and grippers are like that, though. I have become just like Ida and her mean ways, too, by having to listen to Ida so much and also by not having the wide open spaces to get out into and thus forget my misery. It is easy as falling off a log backwards to grumble and blame others for all the bad things that happen. People set ugly so much because they have very little beauty in their lives. I wish that I could get outside for months on time like I did as a young man back in East Texas; the beautiful dogwoods blooming in the forests was enough to make you praise God for all the bounty of the land and thus to forget the problems that the old shirttail sheriff and Nimrod Junior caused along with losing the War Between the States and having cutthroat robbers on the roads. All the beautiful pine trees took the mind off its problems back then; seeing the wild orchids and hanging moss on all the trees in the deep Big Thicket down close to Hardin and Liberty way really makes one feel alive and good. The Spanish Moss, you know, looked like a woman's long hair hanging down.

I miss the forests that were full of animals to hunt; panthers were a common thing, even in the creeks near Winniford Way. Used to take dogs to find them and make the country safe for cattle; old Urbane Alexander had started a hunting club to kill wolves as well--that was back in 1852 or before. My son Dude still hunts his hounds in those creeks to get the wolves that kill chickens and turkeys that folks try to raise for a cash crop. Some hunters take fox to let loose and reproduce so as to hunt later, but a fox will kill turkeys and not eat them, just stack the dead turkeys up in a pile like a game counting the kill. A fox is like a man in that killing is the game or fun rather than just killing when needing to eat, such waste like a robber baron today. The rich like to prey on less fortunate not just to get money but to feel powerful. The hostile frontier of open land spaces has disappeared as a place to conquer with man's vital energy being exhausted so the mental behavior of mind space is the modern domain of lusty leaders like the wealthy now do and also the high society preachers, even Hitler has the same mind set about modern mankind. Hitler is a product of the times just like everybody is and always has been--nobody is the master of his fate. A person just goes with the tide of human events and no one thing causes any other one thing. A big number of things are always happening at any one time to cause all the responses that may look simple but really aren't.

Just like my old daddy's long given names being so cavalier and aristocratic like the Prince of Wales or all kings having so many given names. But all those names came from the surnames of family; thus, my dad really had 7 given names such as Madison Maxwell Monroe Morrison Morley Murray Mumford Taylor. He had more names than a whole county full

of elegant folks. Aristocrats were always given a lot of family names so they could choose the one that suited them best. Infact the Indians did a similar thing, only an Injun got to name himself the third summer of his life when getting the feel of his emerging personality. One of the Wilson clan that I guided to Indian Territory along with the cousins Tom Landtroop and Jim Ellis was named Welcom Wilson when he was little by his father Collins Wilson because of his good nature. Also, just like the Lancaster, Texas Taylor family naming Pleasant Taylor for his basic human nature as something good to live up to. Going to the Taylor family reunions at Greenville City Park every July was an adventure into the genealogy of nomenclature as well as keeping in touch. The Taylor family got spread about slowly but surely when going west to get mustang horses or broncho when untamed. Some Taylor always stayed in the wilderness country to settle there rather than return to the old ways of being second fiddle to the back home rich and mighty; tis better to be a big fish in a very small wild pond than a small fishy in the very large pool of labor that the robber barons control. Taming a broncho is a wonderful things to do, so don't knock what you have not tried even though it looks very dangerous but young bucks of a real man should want to do that good stuff, yet my older brother W. L. was a safe man who wanted only wealth and high position so he gladly became his brother's keeper of young Nimrod safe from the law.

Visiting in the country at Winniford Way was the closest I could get back to the wild unspoiled open spaces of my youth. And then riding the rails free from Commerce to Dallas and back by night late or on another day from Commerce to Texarkana to visit Tom and Ellis was all the freedom that last days could know. But I could at least get away from Ida and her bossy ways. All the daughter in laws blame me for whatever wayward traits they disliked about their husband; I was the old goat that got all the blame while Laura Estelle was sainted as a marta with her nagging old tongue being ignored but none of the daughter in laws would let that acid tongue live with them so they should practice what they preach and thus let their christian talk become a living human act of kindness rather than the cheap talk it is to get society's approval for my life's sins as all the high fallutin preachers gleefully censure my leaving Laura Estelle and the kids in Commerce in 1902, but I knew that brother Bill would take care of the family for he had lots of money from mother in gold coin as well as those federaldollars and then having a fine mercantile store to keep the money coming in. At least Dude never censored me like the rest; he knew some of the facts of the whole ugly picture. But my whole life was always controlled by bossy women folks and then all of them were rich or ritzy acting at least. The haughty Ider Salmon Taylor was the worst of them all. Ider was enough to give anyone the wonderlust to run away from home even just for a few hours of peace as I was glad to do.

Ida was a haller on wheels when getting started but at least she had no fortune of her own to use to manipulate people or she would have been a real little Hitler for sure. Ida kept a boiling of torment going around the relatives when she could spread ill will; she reminded everyone of their christian duty to help Laura Estelle financially while she had to feed and shelter that no good philender of a husband, meaning me of course. No love was lost between us, just that I could not say anything or I would be thrown out into the cold. The U.S. constitution says we can speak our mind but not so because peace is not assured when an Ida or Ider as I call her to make her mad in an absent minded way that she is not sure that I am doing to her. Ider has made me as bad as she is.

People like to be sad and bad in a nice way, using civility to do their ugly hateful work on each other. Being honest and nice is not the way to be successful and rich. Being rich is all that counts as that is why all the folks try to marry very prosperous families.

Even Lissie married Bud Love whose mother had remarried and was very wealthy. Bud Love's mother was Mrs. Vanderglon or Mrs. Van as we all called her. She though was very quiet most of the time, lived at Paris, Texas and came to visit all the Taylor clan; she truly felt like one of the home folks. She almost bought the farm as they say when a bad land deal would have cheated her; one of the good christians wanted to let her have a good deal on a black land place on Smith Hill on the way to Winniford Way, but Tom my youngest boy just happened to mention that the old place looked rich but was worn out land when he drove by in his car on the way one Sunday out to the country.

All the Taylor family was now strawn outlike Monday's wash. No one gets together anymore to keep in touch.. Old Ider was one reason that everyone got tired of seeing her ugly face or wagging tongue about the evil ways of mine. My son Guy Taylor never even tries to keep in touch because of her but his son Winfred was injured playing football and was forever crippled so he always urged all the relatives never to play that devil game. It is a crippler even back in 1929 and especially now in 1949. His daughter Ruth said the same thing because she saw her dad in so much pain from a silly mindless game. All that football talk just added more fat in the fire about the family to Ida; didn't take much to tick Ider off, just jump out of the pen into the fire with any subject to discuss around Ida unless she wanted to be polite. Ida hated fishing just as much as Wilfred hated football. Ida said she hated the two words of go-fishing and wished they were omitted from the English language because Will went fishing often up at Lake Texoma without her, but Ida would not go even when begged but she wanted to be begged to do whatever was a big lot of trouble to everyone. Ida is one spotted assed baboon. Ida tries to make me feel evil by using christianity against me, telling me that my sins will send me to hell forever for neglecting my wife and children. I intend to use deathbed repentance as my see in the hole to get back at all the mossback christians. I will thus get into the pearley gates at the last possible minute after having had a life time of fun and adventure without false pride of goodie two shoes rich bitches or robber barons.

All rich folks stole their fortunes in the first place so no nice honest person has wealth. All settlers or landowners stole the land from the Indians originally and now the manufacturers cheat on the quality of products to make s oddy goods that sell for a big profit. You have to get up early in the morning to beat a robber baron wheeler dealer like the merchant class that controls the government lobbies in Washington today. Ida liked to read the society page about all the rich elegant people whose ill gotten fortunes make them seem so envivable and of course the Lindley family was her yard stick standard for wealth since her friend Mrs. George was a daughter of the skinflint banker Lindley. I liked to repeat the story of how a Lindley nearly got hanged stealing wilder cattle so he could be even richer than he already was but that did not broke him of suoking eggs so to speak; he was too much of a ring tail tutor to learn better, just got better at hiding his vices. Money always talks people into loving them because of envy but the presche always cater to the rich; Christian duty gets loudly proclaimed only about sins that become known; a hidden descretion allows the good two shoes to be as mean as hell; doing one's christian duty is only doing what gets

public praised as good works not the unobserved duties. Ider always tells me that I will go to hell with all my buddies at the pool hall where I hang out; she hates where I hang out yet does not want me at home either. She says one thing and then wants another things all in the same breath just to make me or anyone else she dislikes feel bad; that's the Christian way to do things. I had rather be in hell with my nice fun loving buddies rather than spend an eternity with her mean old mouth. There's no love lost between us and she knows it, yet seems to expect me to like her.

I just hope that Ida has to happen to her all the things that she dreads; she always says that she will die before Will and his second wife will get to enjoy the nice house she had kept for him. The idea that someone else would enjoy something that belonged to her really kept her upset; she was too greedy and selfish to want anything better to happen to anyone else. Ida acted and thought this way all the time even when coming directly home from church. She prided herself on being a good christian because she was a member of the Christian Church and thus was really a true christian not like a mere Baptist, Methodist or Church of Christ as she called them. But Ida acted like a Baptist who could not fall from grace once a member; she was a self-righteous person full of fury for anyone not in her good graces.

Ida managed to get angry at all family members; she even gave Elsie a hard time often. Elsie had to stay out at Winniford Way for days at a time when visiting from Amarillo because of fuss fights; those hell cats deserved one another though. I just left the house to ride the rails or go to the pool hall and booze a little. But Ider smelled my breath every time I returned to the house to raw hide me if I had a smell she suspected of whatever sin since Ida was the keeper of the morals for the whole town of Commerce. Ida passed the gossip on through her favorite Miz George. Even Dude's wife Ethel and her twin sister Mrs. Bishop were told all the bad things as though being gospel and everyone in Commerce soon knew because all things got mentioned from one little social group to the next group as interesting factual events if not as true gospel. I was the fodder for their griss mill.

I once took a sling shot or old been shooter that I had made from the fork of a peach tree with a slit rubber tire tube and fired off a old peach seed when Ida stooped over to take out the trash to burn; she jumped a mile for a fat woman, but I was hid in the bushes and did not get the blame directly. Ida had a lot of enemies to blame so she thought some younger man kids did not with their nigger shooter as she called the old sling shot of mine. Of course I had to destroy the nigger shooter and not keep it around or I would have rightly been blamed.

I also had to keep my dairy away from her eyes; she once read a few pages and said that old General Sheridan was not the general that had rode by Cherry Wood. Well, she wasn't there and I was very small to know exactly but I was told much later that old Sheridan came through there. Ida just liked to confuse anyone who thought they knew something for sure especially if she disliked them, like she did me. Ida liked to give advice so my advice is not to give advice to young folks who don't listen anyway or at least I did not. So, my advice is not to give boring advice. Just do your own way through life to be happy when you can and not look back. But someone like an old Ida will always come along with a preacher mentality to spread the concept of sin like a cancer.

Spreading guilt is the fun for frustrated christians; they live in the shadow of sin as the fun they are missing out on. Many preachers like to describe in detail the sins they gave up for the Lord's service and you can tell that the preachers really miss all that fun times. Everyone gets such an excited look in their eyes when the sins get such careful detailed explanations. That is the real show at the church house. Preachers really like to come down on what is a favorite sin of the majority so that they can feel guilty while doing it but the rich do not get as much misery on their sins if they donate big sums to building a big edifice for all the sinners to meet in and condemn others as being even more evil.

Every Sunday I get mad at Ida because of her two faced treatment of others; she says bad things behind their faces when they leave. I hear it all because she has made everyone believe that I am so evil that I would thus be expected to spread some bad lie about her so she can as a result not worry about anything that I would say as being believed.

Christmas time is terrible as she gets one a tare to make me go visit other children while she cooks for her own children. She gives expensive gifts and expects even more luxurious presents in return. That's why I give only a small miniature knife to each grandchild or great grand child when born so that the price is equal and the gift is the same in spirit. Of course I have very little money to spend anyway.

Ida calls me a yeller dog democrat even though she votes the same party ticket to hear her tell the tale. I don't believe her though. The solid South is democrat so her wayward vote doesn't yet matter. She likes to say that I would vote Democrat even if the donkey was run on the ticket. But I could never vote the vested interest republican into office or a greenback republican as that is their true color. The color green gets the only real respect in this country. Just read the papers to know that money is the way folks vote; they vote their pocketbook as it is influenced at the time of election. Money is all that gets attention as that is the real god for America today; principle of the things is only how much it costs. Just like the income tax was passed to finally make the robber barons pay for some of the free gravy ride that they had stolen from America but soon during World War II the withholding tax of average worker's pay was withheld to finance the wareffort because every one must pay his fair share so that is still continued after the big war. When the super rich fat dogs talk fairness for everyone, you can bet that some scheming angle exists for the greenback republicans to keep the small men even poorer. The rich are not worth the time of day when they talk principles about everybody having a chance at the pie in the sky finances. The robber barons do a land office business getting fat contract from the federal government to featherbed their own interests; the big boys destroyed free enterprise during the 1920's to cause the depression. Old robber baron Andrew Mellon was the main spokesman for his conflict of interest habits that passed laws to legalize buying companies to merge and then close profitable concerns to cause unemployment everywhere; that merging made the big companies even bigger, certainly the railroads as Commerce learned being a railroad town when the consolidated railyards into the Tyler branch caused layoffs besides the depression. The rich always get much richer during the time that money panics or depressions happen. Hard times make the workers grateful for any kind of work to get a pay check so that a ten or twelve hour work day is normal. The robber baron

manipulates money panics to cause a cheap labor pool of workers eager to take any kind of work under any conditions; the robber barons got free land for right of ways across the western United States for over fifteen hundred miles by the section plus ten thousand dollars cash a mile to build the railroads with the cheap Chinese and nigger labor. So, the income tax was just a justified means to get some funds back from the big rich greenback republicans. I read too much is what Ida says when I mention all this graft and greed done in the name of freedom of business and the American dream, but our true freedom loving founding fathers came from Virginia where the aristocracy ruled in a leisure way for the general welfare of the people, not to create a government just for the tool of the bankers and industrialists. Now, the proletariat industrialists own American business and thus control our government in the name of the people yet. Lincoln was the first simple minded back woodsey man to get taken in by the industrialists schemes. The big rich call themselves reformers while in reality they are the ones needing reforming just like old Sinclair oil company stole and then the owner Sinclair got sent to prison but he conducted business as usual from his jail cell, only the big rich get such preferential treatment. Even old John D. Rockefeller had the troops in Colorado to shoot dead the family of workers who dared to strike against his mines; thus, private property was more important than human life of some poor individual just like a King George III commanding a tyrannical law against the average person. But ole John D. Rockefeller hired a public relations company that made his rich greenback antichrist tactics come out smelling like a rose because of his wealthy status that is obviously given by god; preachers say that God rewards with wealth so as long as the rich attend church no wrong can really be done, and ole John D. even taught Sunday school and gave dimes to the poor on the streets so he created a sweet old man image to hide his ill gotten wealth facade. The Emperors clothes is used to cloak the rich greenbacked republican with preacherfied goodness as long as big tithes are made to the church--organized religion is truly the workshop of the devil and is the true antichrist. The antichrist is not a Jew as most simple minded christians think but the antichrist poses as a true christian working hard inside the finest and most respected church--the antichrist poses as the greatest christian worker if not the very best christian of all. The average person is impressed by the pomp and ceremony of the wealthy so they lust after the glory and excuse any wrong doing because the poor hope to someday to be able to do the same thing, if not themselves then their grandchildren will be rich like that. I was glad to read that Andrew Mellon got sued by Representative Wright Patman, for all the good it did, was not one thing to change the sorry state of mind of the ignorant masses to let the rich keep on robbing them.

I keep on harping on the rich when my mother was rich as could be and came from the aristocracy, not the bourgeois businessmen who now own the government in the name of freedom. Republicans are cross businessmen who will do anything for the almighty dollar while saying they are the true christians. My rich old mother never sneaked around behind anyone's back to do a dirty deal; she said to their face what she disliked and stood her ground forever and did not hire underlings to do any dirty work against those she disliked and thus true freedom existed and was not suppressed by economic slavery like the big companies can now do. I have seen American freedoms die and become subordinated to the needs of the big companies; the individual now has no real power.

I still look forward to my 90th birthday because that makes Ida so angry to think that I will make that ripe old age. That is a good way to

spite Ida and give her some devilment that she might have to put up with me for a few more years. Every year Ida thinks and certainly hopes that it is my last; each winter cold spell is supposed to kill old folks with pneumonia. Some folks are too mean to die is what Ider says about me and she may be right because it is the pot calling the kettle black. Ida is meaner than cat shit on a shingle for kindling early in the morning.

Ider says when I come into the house; well, just look what the dogs drag up. And she means it, too. Ida snoops in my room when I am gone so as to see just what I have been writing in my diary. She wants to throw away my life history diary so I have made 2 copies--one copy has been placed under the foot of my mattress to appear hidden just to fool Ida and the other copy is the one given to Bobby as I finish a few pages and he is sworn to secrecy not to tell Ider; he knows what Ider and Elsie both do behind folks' backs; both Ider and Elsie are his aunts; he has both of them as aunts; the mother and daughter are mean old aunts of his; no little fellow should be cursed with that holy terror. Anyway Bobby does know enough about the family politics to keep a secrecy and also he was the one who urged me to start writing this long herangue about my life on the old plantation and then in Indian Territory and finally in the early oil fields as a roustabout and then retired back to Commerce. Bobby is closed mouthed about things.

I want to be 90 more than anything in a long time just to make Ider suffer, even a 100 would be nice to do. Writing in the diary does take a lot of time to hunt and peck the keys as Bobby calls my typing. Ider tells me that I should read the Bible rather than write such foolish old timey things down that nobody will ever read anyway. Even some preachers got wind that I started this diary things and they emphatically informed me that a good christian only read the Bible not ever read a novel or keep a silly diary so I just crossed off that ignorant church as one that I would do my death & bed repentance for; all the preachers want me as a member so they can claim triumph over the devil amidst us here in Commerce town. I don't give a hang about their quota system.

It is my life and I intend to live it without their interference the way they get invited to dinner around the town membership so they can inspect the household like a nazi patrol on duty. Christians just got to stick their nose in everybody's business and then tell it all fast as they can when learning some secret sin. Christians have nothing better to do than be miserable and then try and make everyone else miserable; misery loves company is why they convert and the grumble if someone they know in the church gets richer than they are.

Commerce has big parades sometimes because of the college. The big town event is Armistice Day here because the local boy Bruce Williams was the first Doughboy in WWI to die in that war and thus a national holiday began here partly through accident. Dr. De Jernett was one of the big land owners and businessmen plus a medical doctor from France originally. During WWI Dr. De Jernett was member of the medical corps and thus when Bruce Williams was the first U.S. soldier to die at Brest, France an honor was arranged; the good doctor wrote his relatives back in France and the idea caught on there as well. But the American Legion Hall Number one was granted to Commerce and thus the national holiday began. The local folks make a big thing out of this distinction. The poor dead boy was never so venerated in life as he is now in death but his relatives do bask in the glory.

Doctor Warren B. De Jernett was a rich old codger; he owned lots of good cotton land as well as the Ford agency in town. Doctor De Jernett was a tightwad for sure; a widder lady and her small kids picked the left over cotton from his fields in the cold of winter after the field hands had got all they could or would. Then, the good Doctor took his thirds of the picking like a sharecropper would have had to pay; that stingy act really showed his true colors and I always felt that he was a prime candidate to be a secret republican voter for he certainly had the morals to suit their party affiliation. He would fleece anybody that he got the chance to do, yet he lived in a big new mansion made of brick and still owned the other fine house next to the old Day Elementary school that was good enough for any rich man. He just always coveted a few more dollars than he already had.

People were fairly well against the good Doctor after that though. He really hurt his reputation. The Doc always gave away a new car when it suited him for good public relations but only then to those he wished to impress like some poor soul who would then forever ingratiate his praises to high heaven; even old Ida had won a car when she was trying to put her boys through college and then did not get the car because she was too prosperous and Ida certainly would not have licked his ass like an ingrate; he did know Ida well enough and all her rich kin folks were too haughty to admit that they needed the car so the good Doctor got w away with not going ahead and giving the car to Ida. I then felt sorry for Ida about that cheat but not anymore as I can see her true nature.

I go to the college library to read other newspapers and also to use the dictionary to look up words that I don't know when reading the Dallas News. In five years I have really gotten a good education from the Dallas News, and from the dictionary. I also look up information in the encyclopedie or get one of the old maid librarians to help me find the info. I double check the facts about the greenback Republicans before I say what devils they are because all my life I have seen their double handed dealings of saying the good things in public but doing the dirty stuff behind closed board room doors. I rant and rave about it all just to keep the conversation going; I don't let it bust a gasket or blood vessel because I expect the worst from government because all my life the republicans have been in power most of the time and thus use the business contracts of the government to feather their own nest. Now, that the democrats are in power I am glad to see the yellow bellied SOB's suffer humiliation for once; republicans caused the depression with their own corruption; they used free enterprise to gain lucrative contracts that make their businesses big and then bigger through mergers that then fire thousands of workers, yet the smaller merged company was making a big profit and not losing money when the hard working men were let go, but the rich don't care. Even now there is talk that the railroad will cease passenger rail service because even though a profit of five thousand dollars a trip is made the same crew could work another freight train that would earn ten times the profit, so it is not losses that cause layoffs but rather greed for even bigger profits, yet the passenger service was part of the treaty deal when the U.S. government paid ten thousand dollars a mile and gave landgrant rightofway that a mail car carrier would be provided on those trains so that is another reason the robber barons want to renege on their contract agreement since honor among thieves is not a thing to keep; they got no scruples. Commerce folks have started to see the double dealing of the railroad tycoons since the big depression nearly ruined this town and now things are only fair to what they were. Folks now will actually talk about the unfair things that the railroad does.

No wonder Jesse James robbed trains so he could get even with their cheating ways back in the old South; their contracts aren't worth the paper they are written on because they just go bankrupt, only to start new companies doing the same thing later; a robber baron greenbacker republican is a shit grinning o'possum faced money grubber whose word is not worth a thing; his bond is not his word like an aristocrat who knows that his family name and honor is at stake if a mark is made against their good name so their word is their bond; cavaliers settled Virginia and other deep South states so the role of family honor that goes back to Scotland and Ireland or even England for centuries sets the role model for any kind of ethical merit in government but not now that the mean old double dealing robber barons own the government through their lobbies and even being senators themselves; they change their color of politics like a chameleon lizard. The bourgeois industrialists now own America since the aristocracy has been defeated. Only American families who settled here generations before the Revolution are true aristocrats if they have roots in Virginia. At least the DAR keeps track of the worthy families who are the true Americans; every surname on my family tree fought in the great revolution--that's why we cavalier settlers only associated with other noble acting and royal descended families so that our children would not be inferior to us; would be terrible to have a child whose half would be inferior stuff from the peasant class or bourgeoisie. At least the Sullivan family is royal enough for us Taylors, even though nigger Mammie seemed to think otherwise about her girls being blood royal princesses; even the nigger Mammie was descended from the Queen of Sheba or so she said and acted for sure. But my Laura Estelle always said that the father of her children came from a good family even though we could not get along.

Laura Estelle and I never considered a divorce because marriage is for life, even though we could not live together. We never wanted anyone else to marry or to live with; no one else would be good enough for either one of us, yet we could not get along when together after returning from Indian country. She nagged like a fish wife and I just could not take that lip from anyone so I just high-tailed it off to the oil fields. Everybody who is prim and proper christian hates me for that but they did not have to live with that hellion tongue of Laura Estelle's and all the other snide remarks of the ritzy family relatives.

I liked the great outdoors more than store work like Nimrod Junior and brother Bill had to do to earn a fortune. I liked to hunt and fish. The running of the dogs was my great passion; I usta to have two or three dozen hound dogs that bayed and chased wolves or whatever at night and usually caught the varmints. I taught Dude to do the same; if my dogs did not obey me to make the catch, I sometimes gave the whole passel away, every last dog sometimes made me mad as hell. I ran the dogs on cold nights in the winter even. It would be cold as a well digger's butt but I would go when the urge struck me. The running of the dogs is a regular thing or long standing tradition in this neck of the woods or in this north central part of East Texas; it was all started by Urbane Alexander when he was a magistrate near Honey Grove during the Republic of Texas days and he expanded the hunting club membership to Black Jack Grove in 1852 or so all the Alexander kin to Ella Winniford claim and they were not one to lie or exaggerate the truth like so many folk. Hearing the dogs barking is music to my ears and I can tell the difference to everyone of my dogs when they tree a coon or fox or o'possum. Dude is truly the son of his father as well as having the same name as I do; he has a son with his name but he doesnot hunt; he is a preacher like the mother.

Dude's wife Ethel is three times his size and is a preacher when needed to fill in at her church. Ida talks something fierce against the way Ethel keeps house so bad while just going here and yon. The daughter Little Ethel is not so little either; she is as big nearly as her maw. Ethel's children never show disrespect to anyone and never gossip that can be overheard at least. They all look dirty or so elegant as Ida would like so she ignores Dude's folks as much as possible; kind folks are not treated as nice as rich looking folks from even richer families so individual goodness is not the main factor for the way christians treat each other; some christian churches are not as good as others like Ethel's Seventh Day Adventist religion doesn't get the awed respect from Ida or even the other outstanding leadership of organized religion.

Social standing is a big part of the preacher game for power. Even the well to do Evans family is not as good as other folks because of their Indian blood so poor Dude went down the social ladder by wedding a part Indian gal. But little Tom did no worse with his marriage. He went into the good graces of Ida for sure since her Elsie married a Winniford also.

My Laura Estelle's old nigger Mammie even approved Ella into the family or so the old black bag thought she did. Laura Estelle's nigger mammie filled young Tom's head with all that royal family stuff and he fell for it in a big way since it don't matter no more about blood lines since money is the only god that America worships. Nigger mammie was a snob of the first order or first water, I am sure. That nigger mammie was really pleased to learn of the Winniford genealogy descended from Robert Bruce, king of Scotland and then going on back to 449 A.D. That black woman then really liked Miss Ella Winniford after that.

The Winniford family had a stingy relative named Robert Ellis who was born and still lived at Florence, Alabama. Robert Ellis lived in his antebellum ancestral home on the landgrant at Florence but wore overalls on a Trailways bus from Alabama to Cumby. Ole Robert owned orange orchards in the Citrus Valley of South Texas. He came every year to harvest the citrus after the cotton harvest in Alabama. Robert gave a TV news conference on how to be frugal as he bragged and said the same thing most of the time when just talking. Robert was a real die in the wool Church of Christ fanatic. He and Ida did not get along one bit so I liked him. But ole Robert Ellis really got a scare on one visit; his eldest girl Elizabeth had not married because she was a real plain face and had been too busy raising the two younger pretty girls after their mother died. Well, the two younger girls had married into local gentry back in old Alabama so they were socially elite and thus expected nice gifts from Robert Ellis when the grandchildren got birthdays; old Templeton Ellis had married Edna Herston whose father fought in the War of 1812 so they had some money and a landgrant when founding Florence in 1820 so they were always needing money to keep up appearances from a rich father in law who was also a miser or the worst skinflint of a tightwad that ever lived so he stayed mad a lot at the inlaws. Being rich is a pain in the arse for sure but preachers left him alone because he knew the Bible better than they did and he was more straight laced than any preacher would dare really be. He scolded everyone around when he saw the least infraction on God's Biblical word so goodie two shoes types just rent the other way when seeing him come around so as to avoid his ire. I did like to see him give Ida and all the local wags a bad time, but he was rich so he could be tolerated as an eccentric nuisance. He hated the federal government as much as I did but for different reason; he hated the tax

bite or legal theft as he called it. I always told him that I was born in another country that no longer exists yet have always lived here in this same state.. Robert Ellis was a first cousin to Ella's mother. He was also kin to Jim Ellis that I guided to Oklahoma Indian country along with their cousins the Landtroops. Old Robert Ellis was a rich man to dress and eat so common, and he was a true Scotchman as well from an old family. Everybody kin to us seemed to be from an old Scotch family, only exception being the Sullivans. No body messed with Robert Ellis, especially Ider and her long tongue. He was no match for the meanest of them all, yet he was quiet as a sleeping hound dog until provoked first.

My Laura Estelle did not visit much ever again in Commerce after I returned in 1932; she stayed with Lissie who already said I was not her true daddy, that Ike was because all the other children were spaced even apart while she was not and that being born in Indian country that no exact records were kept and that all the rest of the family had no way of knowing for sure. Lissie for sure did not want me to be her real daddy. I always had been a man of my word so I have refused to comment one way or the other. Laura Estelle can be the one to tell what she pleases and then blame no one but herself if a bad story gets out; yes or no will not come from me ever. The old nigger mammie does whatever Miss Laura says, and they are always in cahoots against me. They lived together in Houston or Harrisburg; white folks had a fit with a nigger living in a house with whites but the nigger lived in the back part; they were inseparable as always. Laura Estelle sent in some suggestions for a trolley car from Harrisburg to Houston which are right next to each other and it was so named for her, along with a street in Harrisburg or so I was told by some of the proud children after a visit. Ida liked to talk loud about some news of Laura Estelle while I was still in my room or eating so I could just barely overhear and then wonder. Never would tell me face to face all the facts about anything. I was treated like black folks by Ida. I have the reading of my daily Dallas News and going to town or the pool hall and some days I ride the rails to Dallas and back or to Texarkana and back on the next passenger service; leave in the morning after 9 and go to Dallas and back on the evening run at 9 or 10 that night. Killed a day away from bossy Ida. I once went to Pine Bluff but that was too long and too involved; I did that only after I started getting my pension check or old age assistance that Ida called it; she wanted some of it to pay for my meals but I kept enough to buy my tobacco and a little red eye some times plus meals went I rode the rails; could go so much farther and then back all in the same day that would have taken weeks by wagon in the old days. I always went at the change of every season for sure just to see the changes along the way or rightofway. Still was not like when I would leave Cherry Wood to go into the woods to get away from the bossy women folks but the rails gave me a chance to be my own boss somemore. I still put in a garden of course and slopped the hog but after the big war the smell of a hog in town got too fancy for some noses so I stopped and Ida did not seem to mind not having fresh pork. Guess her nose was one of those being offended the most. My hard work around the place was the only reason that I got to stay and I knew that well because Ida told me often enough. No one else would put up with me she told me often enough. I never did anything directly mean to her face for her to hate me so much as she did, except that it was fashionable to hate someone that could be blamed for all the disappointments of the family but Ida did not ever offer to keep Laura Estelle even before I came to live here. Ida did not want to take care of anyone but she did seem to love Will and did take good care of him when he broke both arms and had to be fed and dressed and even Ida had to go to the bathroom for him--she had to take his trousers down and even direct his urination for several weeks. She never complained.

I never could out guess Ida about anything; she just seemed to know what would be expected of her and then not do that way at all if I was the one doing it such as serving a meal always at exactly the right time until I was a minute early and then she had already finished the meal for some reason ahead of its scheduled time that was known to everyone except me of course. Ida liked to play jokes on people, especially something devilish in the name of having fun. Ida would fill a bed full of salt crackers or short fold the sheets if she liked you or so she said. Ida never did any of that fun stuff crap on me because she just went ahead and told me off without having to be sneaky nasty nice to me. When a young man in the family was about to get married Ida liked to sneak a ladies bra and panties or slip or shimmy underthings so as to come in and then fish all the unmentables out from under the sheets and say that he was getting used to sleeping with a woman ahead of time; this was a big joke, a laugh a minute for Ida. This was Ida's mischievous fun. I used the old sling shot on Ida again once after she had been so jovial to her favorite enemies in this funny way that if anyone got angry then the blame was put not on Ida at all. She was a real Little Hitler with the best mind control tactics in the world. I used the sling shot when Ida thought I was long gone into town to that filthy pool hall where only dirty old men hung out as she liked to say. I got my ole pea shooter out and slung a real dried bean onto her big arse when she stooped over to empty the trash into the burning barrel. Ida thought some nigger boys who lived down the road a piece had the nerve to do that to her for she had said some pretty mean things to them once but after that she stopped being so hateful to the black kids.

Ida did not think that I had the nerve to do anything like using the nigger shooter on her because she just wanted an excuse to move me out permanently and she did not realize that I would take such a chance to get in my lick. Ida never told me anything that was happening in the family because I gave up the right to know anything when I left in the middle of the night after Little Tom was born or so she always liked to say. Thus, no one ever told me that my Laura Estelle was sick enough to die; I only learned that something was bad when Will took off from his work shift to go to Houston, not a word was then said as Ida whispered low when leaving like not wanting to bother me if I was asleep. Ida was slick as could be. But when Little Bobby returned from my Laura Estelle's funeral, he crawled upon my knee and put his arms around my neck to whisper in my ear that he was so glad that I was still alive for him to love. Tears ran down his little face and my old wrinkled neck was wet from both. No one else in the family loved me enough to share the mutual grief for my Laura Estelle. I never had imagined what it would be alike to live in this world without my Laura Estelle being alive somewhere with our children. I always hoped that I would die first so that no one would look at me and then resent that I had outlived my Laura Estelle. Little Bobby cried for both of us, even for me to remain alive longer for him to love and that's why I then decided to write all this silly account of the Taylor clan for Little Bobby to know and understand some of the reasons for what happened. My Laura Estelle died February 13, 1942 on a Friday just after 8 p.m. We had decided the day before to announce our plans to marry on Valentine's Day well over 50 years ago. But a Friday 13th was always a bad omen for my Laura Estelle; she usta get bad sick on a Friday 13th even Opal ran her car back over poor unsuspecting thing once. Opal backed over my Laura Estelle in her new Packard, backed right out of the garage. My dear Laura Estelle died of a heart ailment and she could not take aspirin because he caused a flutter as Tom always worried when telling me about

his mother's failing health over the 8 years. My health much improved after I came back to Commerce and had a warm place to sleep and three squares a day. Tom always told me how his mother was and talked to me like a real person about everyone in the family even though he was the one as a baby who was the most neglected by my leaving. I never meant to live so long and so apart from my Laura Estelle; circumstances got the best of us both. Everyone always repeated the sorrows we had always experienced rather than mentioning the good times so we just drifted apart further at first. Every cousin put in their two cents about how no real self respecting wife would speak to a husband who left his wife and little children for so long at a time but my brother Bill had gotten the fortune in gold coins from mother to take care of young Nimrod and was in a very profitable business so the family stuck together and was never in fear of starving but city folk do not understand how the gentry takes care of its own. I did not abandoned my family in the middle of the prairie; I did return to Commerce when my brother Bill had a big mercantile store and lots of gold coins stashed away just like my mother had always done. The Ladies Aid society was a big one for butting in where they had no business unless everybody's business was their real business as I soon found out about the good two shoes of high society well churched folks in town.

Ida was the best of the Ladies Aid group. She knew more before it happened than anyone in town. Ida could see someone going somewhere and just knew what they were up to, and usually Ida was right as I later learned. Ider should have worked for the FBI or Hitler's truth squad; she would have loved to beat the truth out of folks she hated. Ider would have beat catholics to death, that's why she insisted on an abortion for little Ida Margaret's baby because she knew that if the just divorced fly boy of a husband learned about the child that he would have returned and insisted of raising the little tyke as a good catholic and Ider said that the abortion assured one less papist in the world. And that kitchen table operation left Ida Margaret unable to have anymore children, must have used a coat hanger to boot, as I liked to say when Ider could overhear me talking about someone else who had to sneak around to have an abortion so as to avoid having a bastard to ruin the reputation of the whole family not just the hussey of a young girl, even the mother and daddy got accused of not doing their proper job of rearing a true christian daughter.

Ida spread all the stories faster than they could happen around Commerce but everything always turned out to be exactly as she said. Ida did not entertain much; she just went the rounds of church, grocery buying and shopping for clothes to see everyone that she knew to spread the word. Ida talked on the telephone a lot though. Ida did not invite many people to her house, only family, here. Ida did not invite Dude and his family to dinner because they would break down the furniture and crack the toilet as had been done at everyone's house where they did visit. Ethel and little Ethel weighed a tone or more together. The pair dragged the ground when they all got inside that big old Chrysler, or Buick or whatever. Little Ethel was always hungry; she ask for permission to drink the pickle juice once after having eaten a big meal, even drank the left over olive oil in a jar. Ida did like to tell that fact real often.

All Dude's folks dressed clean as a whistle even though not fine or elegant like they could have afforded to to impress the Ladies Aid folks. Some folks said they was dirty and smelled back but not everyone used fancy uptown deodorant like Ida said they should; Ida liked to tell that too many rednecks had BO bad enough to kill a skunk. Ida had a comment

about every subject in the world, if it got discussed inside the city limits of Commerce. Commerce was her world or universe and thus only what concerned the local citizens enough to get mentioned then ever got a pronouncement from Ida's lips. She got in a big dither when the subject of dinosaurs got taught in school; a heresy Ida called it when teaching that dinosaurs roamed the earth millions of years ago when the Bible taught that the world was no more than just over 5000 years old. Seemed odd that it was the Jews whose word was taken for the age of the Bible yet Ida hated Jews as much as Catholics. Ida sure could suddenly take the word of a hated Jew as gospel when she decided to hate something else like the fossil fuel source which by the way Ida said that oil and gas could not be derived from those funny monsters. No true Christian could believe that dinosaurs ever lived; anyone who did believe that should be horse whipped and then tarred and feathered and rid out of town on a rail as Ida liked to threatened. That's when I decided that those big monster dinosaurs really must have lived and done all that the college professors said because Ida was so sure that all was not true. I went to the college library to read up on the subject and was amazed to learn about fossil discoveries in Glen Rose Texas are the best in the world; in our own back yard so to speak and Ida does not believe. I saw the pictures of the things but never bothered to discuss with Ida because she would have booted me out of the house forever just for disagreeing on such a heavy matter of theology.

Seemed so odd that preachers taught in their sermons that segregation of the races was God's way; separate but equal is a redneck invention because aristocracy had blacks living close on the place among us on the plantation and house niggers slept at the foot of the bed to take care of us when we were sick or even them; I like having niggers living in the back yard for they sing a lot and sound happier than most white people who are so free to criticize other folks like Ida does; I just don't believe in mixed marriages. I also like to call black folks niggers because that is what they usta to call themselves before Colored and Negro became the talk for elegant acting white folks in polite society. Besides, Black folks came from the Niger River region of Africa to give the name Nigger that sounds pretty when it is said on the tip of the tongue like tasting the sweet words of civil address to each other. I never meant the meanness when saying Niggers that the Klu Klux Klan does when burning or hanging a negro for getting to close to a white woman; niggers at Cherry Wood even bathed big children and also bathed the old folks and certainly prepared all the food and handled everything we white folks ate or used so this idea of segregation of separate but equal is a redneck idea to use politics to divide people; the ghetto is now also a cheap pool of labor force to have the negro in economic slavery so issues have to have clever names to keep the hatred going by the proletariat republicans.

Most voters don't consider issues, only appearances of the men that they vote for such as Tom Dewey looked like a crook in a bank that some big Philadelphia lawyer had just got off scott free when everyone knew he was guilty as sin. and Al Smith on the radio sounded terrible so any voted who heard his voice was literally turned off. Candidates have got to sound pleasing to the ear and also to look pretty as a picture to the eye, does not matter the real issue or politics involved. Seems odd that a college educated person could ever vote Republican; their vile history is self evident to any well read person plus education should enable you to see the subtle double dealings tendencies such as the good will of foreign aid to Europe is mainly because the monetary exchange of transferring dollars into pounds or francs earn a nice exchange fee on every billion dollars.

in aid, so no altruism is there after all. I read the newspapers to learn that senators have family companies that do the money exchange so this conflict of interest is the way that big business folks are used to doing things. The robber baron is the modern equivalent of tyrant King George III; the big rich are like the dukes of colonial times, only they today have no class of social distinction except as based on the greenbacks deposited in their banks. Republicans cause the biggest scandals in the government and prison terms result by office holders in their party because they are accustomed to shady deals as a way to do business of their own and thus also with the government's money such as in the 1920's produced the biggest crooks being jailed plus ole William G. Harding was the most corrupt gangster affiliated president who was poisoned for his duplicity. Republican good sounding politics is double talk; their golden airy promise turns to lead balloons that burst for the average person; history proves me right for the one who can read or will take the time just to go to the library encyclopaedia. The largest deficits also happen during the old republican presidencies because they give big contracts to their good old buddy system of spoils to the victors. I am now so glad to be living in the time of 5 demopret party elections in a row after all those grim years of the republicans owning the government after the war between the states with only Grover Cleveland being the demopret only after the war in the last half of that century. And unemployment was 25 per cent during those republican years because they needed a pool of cheap labor so that folks would be eager to take any job at any low pay. The republicans killed free enterprise during the three consecutive terms of the 1920's when mergers of big companies with giant companies caused unemployment to just save executive expenses at first that then domonined effect to topple lots of jobs, just like the trains stopping or wanting to cease passenger service that is earning five thousand dollars profit for each train but would earn but would earn ten or even a hundred times that profit for an all freight train so the big boy republicans or robber barons will soon prove that on paper a passenger train loses money so then economics require cutting it all out. I just wish that big rich folks would be honest for once to admit their rreal reasons for doing something without having to read through many newspapers to learn the facts or wait a generation or two for the facts to surface. The average citizen has no chance in this dog eat world of money changers.

I now like to write all this stuff down on paper because the memories are nice for all the early long ago things back at Cherry Wood and then to Commerce and on to Indian Country and back and all. But the thoughts about people and politics really does help soften the bad memories to write and to analyze them all, to sort out all the stuff. Everyone should keep a daily diary and then the memories would really be long winded and involved I guess.

I spell bad unless I look up most of the words; I usually reread and then retype it all if I have time between new memories. I have little else to do or to think about unless getting real mad at Ider; I like to call her Ider but only to her back as she insists Ida is the only correct way to say her name. I also ask college educated folks about punctuation before I retype some pages if I think the meaning gets mixed up but then I don't tell what I am doing, just say that I am reading the newspaper and want to know why some words gets set off and others like them don't. I have to hunt and peck it all on the machine but I am fast as long as I look at the keys, sometimes they all hit together and have to be pulled apart and then my fingers are black as tar, smudged like oil.

Educated folks are peculiar and mean in a nice sort of way much like Ida. They seem helpful at first to inform facts but really aren't when they get a chance to sneer at you for not knowing something. An educated person from the North sneers at a Southerner; tis a new racism of region against region. Really do sneer at my saying you all because only a very ignorant persons you all as I was told at the barber shop by one of the college teachers; they don't think that anything good ever happened here till they arrived and they sneer at our traditions. But the majority of what a yankee says is wrong--just check the Websters Dictionary the way I learned to do and then wait for them to come back and say that the next time, like yankees say double letters in words that have only one such as wint-ter for winter; all the letters get incorrectly done that way by yankees who think they can never be wrong when down South and do not show respect for southerners as having an opinion worth a hoot because we are ignorant hicks or would not live down here and because niggers talk with a southern accent that therefore the southern accent is ignorant as within itself somehow and thus inferior because blacks speak with that accent so everyone decent from the south with someday have to talk the way the radio announcers speak if wanting to be respected when visiting out of the South. I talk much like folks from Pennsylvania Dutch because my mother set the hearing pattern for my speech and the niggers on the place at Cherry Wood. All my memories are full of funny characters of oddball people talking in brogues from all over the country because I travelled a lot and worked with folks from all over. I tell the funny stories in Dewey Chapman's barber shop; he drinks a lot and I get a dram or two when out of town coming back from my jsunts; Dewey appreciates my talents for delivery even though his wife Mildred does not.

Not a day passes by that I don't always think about my Laura Estelle, never has a day passed without thinking about her; she was the beginning of all the memories even back on Cherry Wood; we grew up together, always, a part of everywhere I went; our history was together as neighbors whose daddies got killed during the awful war between the states as her mother soon died and was then eager to visit at Cherry Wood for my mother was like a second mother to her since her own older sister mistreated her, wanting all the property shares for themselves. Just can't get my Laura Estelle out of my mind. She is the only love of my love; I went sparking only after her. All this century of our marriage has been a time of angry quarrels or discension but I never stopped loving my Laura Estelle--or could, or ever wanted to stop loving her. She lived as many years in the 20th century as she did in the last century.

Opal or Lessie never invited me to visit because they feared, I guess, ~~that I would stay~~ and then never leave like Terza never left Joe Mangum's place till Nimrod Junior got her to nursemaid him in Greenville. Opal had a big enough place to house me and to enjoy from what everyone says since she had a round house at Hardin. But Lessie had a small house full of her kids to share and thus I would not impose much less go uninvited even to my own children's homes. Lessie still says that I am not her real daddy. She knows how to hurt a man when he is down but then her sorrow was really bad or she would not lash at when given the chance.

I make a big thing about living till my 90th birthday just to pester Ida who really is afraid that I will live that long or even longer. I really don't want to keep living and living now that my Laura Estelle is dead to this world. I usta just wonder what she was doing and thinking somewhere at the same time that I was aggravated at something; I could just hear her voice saying something about the situation. I will someday go to

meet my Laura Estelle but Ida once said that even in eternity we would not be together because Miz Taylor was a good lady while I was a dirty old man. Ida may be right but she doesnot have to delight in saying it loud enough for me to hear or overhear all her hatredfulness about me. Someday someone will do something mean just like her to herownself.

God is finally a democrat now after so many years of being a robber baron republican; preachers even tell christians how to vote, doing just like catholic priests did tell folks how to live every detail of their lives before the reformation with confessional time revealing all; the loose fundamentalists will eventually destroy their own religion here in America by bossing folks in the name of goodness that the Bible does not really ordain them to do, just like giving money to these radio churches is a really big sin if ever I heard one but small minded do that bunko crazy stuff. The good christian acting folks have a peculiar ethical habit of taking a memo of a dead friend while the corpse is lying in state; the churchy folks just take or truly steal yard tools or carpentry tools as a memento and do not consider that stealing and can then always become born again if these sins accumulate to point of community social wags calling it a bad sin; born again christians never have to return the stolen goods; no restitution has to be made according to their crazy religion so their christianity is a license to steal like Old Cigarette Adams here did, who worked a night watchman shift for 20 years at A & P grocery store chain; he stole for over 20 years and bought himself 2 farms but finally got caught stealing only cigarettes so he was fired. He later repented at church but never returned the stolen fortune in goods or cash, hence, the name Cigarettes was always mentioned at his backside.

I am not much on remembering exact dates except when my heart has been broken like witnessing the killing of brother Nimrod on the streets of Winnsboro and then the death of my Laura Estelle. We all die of a heart ailment in this hard life; that newfangled aspirin medication was bad medicine for her heart and for mine I learned; Tom told me that his mother could not take aspirin.

Tom has the rosy cheeks of so many of us Taylors. This rosy color is a sign of inherited respiratory malady or so I am told, just as most Taylors are born big drinkers to point of excess and then smoke to cough up a storm. Most little baby Taylors like the taste of alcohol and the smell of smokes as well, but Little Bobby does not like any of the stuff. He is more like his grandfather Winniford in temperament but looks much like all the Taylors like a hereford bull showing through.

Opal is a beautiful woman and smart; she left Jack Mackey and came to live with Tom and Ella in July of 1927; she was living down in Houston where Jack Mackey was a railroad man who got a better job there and that was lucky much later for Opal when they did get a divorce. Opal and her daughter Loretta lived till Thanksgiving with Tom who bought all their clothes, fed and bought school books for Loretta. Jack then came back and brought a kitten to little Lynne Estelle; they named that cat Jackie. I have heard that story a thousand times from Ida who has meant for me to overhear it because she includes that Tom takes in all the Taylors like a stray cat or stray dog, meaning me too. Makes me want to beat the day lights out of Ida for repeating her pet stories for my benefit to make me feel bad about being poor and underfoot; Ida is too stingy to spend much money on anyone, except to feed her own Salmon folks and her own children; Ida only knows how to have a one horse affair yet thinks she has all the class necessary in the world. Idier can say the meanest things in the nicest sounding way; she is a Little Hitler for sure.

I am always being told how evil and wicked I am because I hang out at the old pool hall downtown that my now dead brother Jim owned; Ida says loose women meet us there and we booze it up. I just wish that I could do at my old age all the good stuff Ida says I do. I can't even afford to buy the bottle of good Scotch that she says I drink every day. I would be as bad as Ida says if I could afford to just to show her. Dewey's barber shop is a good place also to stop everyday and kill an hour or so because old Dewey drinks when I can get a drop his way. Herman Holly also drops by Dewey's barber shop every day from his job at the lumber yard. Sometimes we all stop at his brother Winnie's grocery and service station in front of their house on South Park Street. His business is run by his wife Alma who is a fright to behold with her ugly dresses and she scratches her arse while pumping gasoline into the cars; their place though is in the south side yard of the old Holly mansion. Their older uncle Tom Holly was mayor of Commerce in 1924 when my boy Tom married. Tom Holly's older son went to Lubbock in the 20's to get rich in the development of that desert town. Herman Holly married Verna Lee Baber; Verna Lee's mother was Lula Wilson who was a sister to Collins Wilson and Matt Benton; The Wilsons were kin to Ella Winniford's mother Maggie Landtroop Winniford. The Baber family lived on the land next to Bob Winniford near Cumby or old Black Jack Grove. I like to take Bobby on a long walk around Commerce down the streets to point out the people who I know and also know where they came from or who all is kin to. Seems odd that so many folks are all branch water kin to the old families around these parts. The Holly family is close like ours to visit each other and then stay a long time. Herman, Winnie and Edger or Cotton Holly all went to Lubbock to pick cotton along with Horece Winniford; they had such a good time that they all keep talking it to death about their fun times out west like it was the only unusual thing ever done in their dull lives, guess they never had the good chance like I did to go west into really wild Indian country and thus to explore desolate places; modern folks do not have much to look forward to that is truly new and unique in their prim and proper lives that only the ways of the city dictate or rather the dictates of the preacher good folks bossing the ethical behavior of everyone. Well, the Holly family returns to their Commerce ties or family roots to go to Easter egg hunts out at Bob Winniford's place north of Cumby. The Holly family had lived just below Smith Hill on the highway into town; Ruby Holly was a character who rode a horse one day when a big rain fell on the black land to cause Tom and Ella to slide off the road into the ditch; Ruby rode so proud of her self around the stuck Pontiac car and waved at them with a big smile just as her horse sunk with her legs in the stirrups; she called Tom ole horse feathers because he was so harry; Tom had to dig her out and then dig that horse loose from the washed field soil into the ditch. Little Buddy Holly visited with his folks from Lubbock back to Commerce; he was a quiet mannered fellow like Bobby Taylor.

Tom tells talltales to entertain everyone about a mythical trip from a place called Commerce to dusty California. Tom said that his uncle from Scotland came to America and then to Texas to visit everyone, plus to see the country. So, they decided to walk west because that would be cheaper, you know how cheap a Scotsman is to save money more than a Jew is about being stingy. But this old cheap Scotchman said he just wanted to be able to see America more closely by walking across the great American desert. And when they, or Tom and his uncle, had been walking for weeks and got to where the Grand Canyon now is, that the old Scotchman uncle took out his watch to see if he was able to eat lunch because he did not want to eat his meals too close together because it would cost too much to eat real often. Well, the old miser dropped a penny when looking for the

his watch in his deep pocket to see the exact time of day. That one lost penny was a real treasure to that cheap man so he made ole Tom dig till he found that one red cent; and today everybody calls that deep hole Grand Canyon. And when they all got to California, they needed to replenish their money so they went into a restaurant business. The motto printed on a sign outside; We Never Close and a Chinese place across the street said Me Wakey Too. The waiters wore roller skates to serve because the place was so big and the head waiter rode a motor scooter. And on Sunday at noon only the courtiest of grace was said so one Sunday they called on dear Brother Jones to say grace; well, 1,500 brother Jones stood up to turn thanks for the lord's food. That was just how big the place was.

The food was a major chore to prepare so one day Paul Bunyan and his oxen Babe came by; the ox went to the cistern to get a drink of water but fell in; Tom knew he had to think quick to save that oxen's life so he also jumped into the cistern and then began to milk that ox until the ox started to swim in all the liquid until the moving made butter out of the thick cream. And that was only enough butter and cream to last half way through the breakfast crowd at that mighty restaurant. Tom also had a very good hunting dog that all he had to do was tell the dog what size pelt he wanted and the dog would go kill the size to fill the bill. But one day Tom was repairing the ironing board for his wife Ella when the dog saw that size of plank so he ran off to kill a fox and we have never seen that dog since because it is still looking for a fox that big and knows better than to come home empty handed to disappoint Tom. Now, that's the good old tall tales that entertain everyone on a good rainy day; the radio even does not have such good stories to thrill us all. But the news does make the radio worthwhile.

My son Will took a correspondence course to learn radioing; he made several to sell and bought all the parts by mail. He even made the radio in my room; otherwise Ida would not have let me have a radio to listen to. Will was good in mathematics without every going to college like his son Weldon was a genius at math to teach at the college here. Tom was also good at business type math; Tom had a roofing company and would just walk around a house to leg measure while talking to the prospective customer and then would give his estimate. Well, the big math professor at the college told Tom that such a system was ignorant and foolish and not to be taken seriously so he had his class to measure the house and then figure the square footage, but the difference was 2 cents more for the mighty professor's figuring but that stingy haughty man only paid Tom at the price Tom gave which saved him 2 cents after acting so high and mighty. The cheapskate was not man enough to pay the mistake of his higher 2cent figure.

The college was the best thing that ever happened to Commerce even though the townsfolk liked to complain about the element who attended class and just dated the local girls in order to bed them down and get them pregnant. So many stories liked to repeat that tale. Mister Sam Rayburn attended the Mayo Normal College here in Commerce; also Sam Winniford attended college with the political Mister Sam Rayburn who has a bunch of sister around these parts; the Lightfoot family is kin from one of his sisters and Indian too boot. Poor old William Leonidas Mayo founded Mayo Normal College at Copper and a fire got the place, just like so many there nearly destroyed that county seat town. He died March 14, 1917 and left his widow to run the college that the state of Texas wanted to buy and just offered her twenty five thousand dollars or else until it was learned that a hundred thousand dollar life insurance policy was also left to her so she did not have to sell; then the state paid her in cash twenty times the original offer so only rich seeming people can get a good deal from the rich robber barons so I guess that the rich will

someday own the world since their trapping of wealthy pomp and circumstance impress even the poor more than the already rich; republicans will truly control everything since that is what folks want to have for themselves and thus think that by being next to wealth that surely it will rub off on themselves. Preachers are the most impressionable folks who proclaim that wealth is God's rewards so God is a rich man afterall to hear tell by the big church folks. Educated people seem to want riches worse than other folks because they study and see pictures that show how the wealthy live and thus get all crazed to have the same things out of life rather than being their own person because things really own the individual who must labor just to have and to keep the finery of this crazy world. The money grubbers dig their own graves of a dull luxury life, in filthy lucre.

The Mayo kids will be rich and will move to Dallas or so Ida always seems to know. She knows everyting. Mrs. Mayo was a lady of high style who knew the writer Walt Whitman or so everybody says and he once visited her in Cooper where the Normal College first was and then they walked back to Dallas in the springtime to start the odd tradition that a long hike was a good thing to do in memorial to that famous visit but they were all just to poor to afford better if it was true. A horse would not have cost so much back then to have traded for tuition even; a Normal School meant a teachers school back then. Education is about the only place that any kind of adventure can happen anymore now that America has been all discover or just about all discovered out; no frontiers of Indian lands to be taken exist, only the inventions of new discoveries of ideas even are yet to be found by the educated fools who seem more intent on their little area of education than on how to get along with people or to have a good fun times. But Weldon is a state champ on checkers; he has won awards and a name for himself in that area; he also good with the bow and arrow as I have told enough tales about Indians to instill my grandchildren with the grace and skill of those wonderful redmen that I knew first hand.

Weldon married Virginia Thomas who herself looks like Claudia Teylor Johnson; Captain Taylor is her dad in Karnack and is a distant cousin of my dad so the politician husband of hers who was a teacher shows how far a school teacher can go if he has rich family behind him. I miss the old family reunions where we got to catch up on the news about the whole family in a way that was not gossip like I now just get to hear in snatches.

Commerce is such a little place to be so full of gossip and yet also to keep in contact with the family in so many place; keeping in touch is odd but the college brings lots of folks here for many different reasons.

Ike Holly also had a dray service like my brother Ike Taylor did. They were slaphappy friends who would meet in the middle of the street to stop traffic with their teams and shout, "I thought that you knew me and you thought that you knew me but we didn't know each other very well." Sometimes they would shout and threatened, "If you don't get out of my way, you will be sorry at what will happen." One time, a stranger did not get out of the right of way so Ike laughed and said, "I am the sorry one to have to detour out of your way." and he whorawed with a belly laugh.

A salesman often came to Commerce and he had a real fun time way of introducing himself to a stranger while others around knew him well; such as My name is Brown and I am Brown all over, B-R-O-W-N." So, another new guy to town introduced himself to salesman W Brown by saying, "My name is White; I am White all over except for my asshole which is Brown--B-R-O-W-N so call me White--W-H-I-T-E." Everyone laughed at the joke that whorawed him real good.

Then the railroad man Matt Martin taught his young son to act very courteous but to use cuss words when meeting someone on the street and say, "Have a goddamned good day you whore of a lady." The boy is grown now and refuses even to cuss at idle things because of that joke at his expense and

use of propriety that excuses a child who curses because a child is supposed to be innocent and all good rather than evil. This cruel joke was a shock to those adults who met the little boy on the streets of Commerce to hear foul language in public.

The veterans back from the world wars talk dirty all the time like that even about their food on the table or whatever besides getting angry at someone to cuss out or mad at a tire on a car that goes flat. But when I talked ugly to get stubborn cattle across a river full of quicksand, I was always told with the repeated stories that I was horrible; the GI Joe cursing seems to have no purpose to fill when cussing like a sailor over every little thing instead of getting angry at a job not being done well or fast enough; the military service makes asshole buddies out of guys instead of just butt holing around.

All these sleazy oddball characters in Commerce polite society all have more respect than I do because of Ida's big mouth to dredge up my past mistakes to put on public display all the time rather than put that behind me like she does for her good friends who do her dirty but behind their backs, the two faced snakes. Christians never really forgive or certainly never forget as they keep the buried truth sticking out so that a handle can be taken to pull old woes or wounds back as fodder for ugly fuss fights when everything else gets dull. Second chances are only given to people just like themselves with the same evil actions because they are really saying if I forgive you then you forgive me. So not many fathers left their wife and children in one town while going to some place else like I did and that is an unpardonable sin to the good christians.

If I were young today, I would be a preacher, an evangelist going all over the country reforming and saving souls; it is only the last real frontier left today. God is made into people's own imagined concept of their current thinking like God was a bound to be a republican after the war between the states while now God is a democrat because of Franklin Delno Roosevelt's patrician image of a wonderful rich man helping the poor.

Commerce has lots of rich folks for such a small town and a new place at that but the railroad and college attract smarter people to an area so they can preen themselves to appear smart as well as rich. Well, the Maloney family is rich and haughty even though doing good works with the chamber of commerce organization in Commerce. Old man Maloney got angry when his only daughter married a railroad man who had no money even though he was descended from Davy Crockett the Alamo hero. Crockett would be ever let his wife spend any of her inheritance so the fortune of four hundred thousand dollars in cash was put in a trust fund till any future unborn child was 30 years old so the money was placed there long before their only girl was born to grow up on a day laborers wage yet to be a wealthy young lady some day.

Commercesonians are like a movie script for what happens in this little place that is a modern Babylon. Some folks calls us Commerceites so what's the heck about that term. The two movie houses are good escapism for the strict life here; the Lyric or bloody bucket as called because of the shootem up westerns full of gore plasses most of the populace with their thirst for blood and suffering. Violence is the best form of entertainment because it parallels life so much to show that the weak get beaten down even more so by the strong; God likes a winner and is only on the side of the winner if history can be believed in the Bible as well as the school books. No one knows God's mind better than I do so preachers aren't the

only ones alive who speak to God as I read tell from their boasts of knowing the scriptures best because they went to some seminary or true believers school, as they inform to create a job for themselves for if everyone just read the Bible there would be no need for a preacher and his big salary for a job that all can do so easily. I often have to point out the written word of God to these men of the cloth when they get too ambitious for their worldly good. I have had to point out errors to many educated fools lately such as a professor who corrected me on my speech using Scotch for the Scots nation he said; how dare he to tell me, a true descendant of all Scots folks so I took the idiot fool to the college library and pulled an encyclopedia from the shelves to show that Scotland does indeed make a dual reference of Scots and Scotch-Irish descendants. Clever people just want to correct others so I delighted in being human to correct his manners; he had a yankee accent that I wanted to correct as well since he decided to give me a bad time simply because of my speech habits not being just exactly as his; I speak a corruption of Pennsylvania Dutch brogue and Southern broed A as one speech teacher explained my blend of talking. The college teachers think they are the super educated ones and know everything worth knowing so saying that my speaking voice is not so typical southern is true because I traveled a lot and knew folks from all parts yet I do say some words just like my mother because I can still hear the echoes of her voice when certain words get said.

No part of life ever gets lost along the way of a long life; the old memories keep getting brought back just like yesterday when sometimes the things that happened yesterday are not any clearer; but I am cursed with a memory like all the Taylors; we don't forget or want to. Ida is also just like that too only she keep riding a dead horse to death again and again.

Ida bites her words off at the ends just like a hammer hitting hard. She is not a good southern speaker with a drawn out ending to her words. Ida likes to say quick snippy things so she works them into the conversation like a machine going great guns to snipe her remarks on me or anyone else she dislikes. Ida tells lots of things over and over just to make a point of what she enjoys needling about someone; she uses niceties to be ugly as possible such as when someone from the country visits and does not have a bathroom with running water and then Ida says that no one can really get clean without a shower tub and oh how she keeps harping on that subject of hygiene problem until they leave in shame because Ida has just got to feel superior and then to show it by driving the point home hard as nails at every chance she can get. But little Bobby dislikes Ida and will not come inside to visit unless made to come with his aunts; he always informs old Ider that he had rather be playing out at the farm as he calls Winniford Way so that really cramps her style since that Taylor grandchild prefers to be in the horrid country that Ida hates and has taught Ida Margaret never to visit her Winniford grandparents out there; Ida has taught little Ida Margaret to drive past and not visit her ailing grandfather Winniford, and that makes Ida feel so good and smart for a good christian like she is. Mean things being done seems to be the proper way for good christians to treat each other when a place gets very civilized like Commerce has finally done. I would like to be a preacher to boss Ida around and tell her just exactly how she should act and think and do but I would have to be rich and famous first for a poor preacher has no clout and intelligence seems to be attributed to how much money you make since low minded stupid people just can't have smarts enough to be rich so God rewards good hard working folks with wealth and thus the rich are god's chosen children, rather than the rich being clever enough to steal and plunder the filthy lucre like old Cigarette Adams and other conniving Commerce businessmen like the Lindleys.

Ida is getting on another high horse idea to move me out; she wants Dude to keep me for a change; Ida says that Ethel can take some of the responsibility since I just go to town and hang around the pool hall all day. But the longer walks would really be impossible during cold bad rainy weather since Dude lives on Walloy Road south of town beyond the college. But Ida wants me to have a bad time of it; she resents that my routine is nice and enjoyable so she has to throw a monkey wrench in it if she can and she can find a way when given enough time to figure out how to do something hateful while yet letting on that her christian duty does not get offended. Ida should have to live an eternity with folks that she has done dirty over the years. But old Ida would make them more miserable than could ever do to her so I don't wish off on anyone the fate worse than death to live with her.

Ida has been talking more about moving me out; she is spreading the word more and more that she is no longer physically able and that Dude still has his own grown daughter little Ethel at home to help his wife care for me; see, I told you that Ider would come up with a good excuse. I am old and poor so will have to be thrown around like an old worn out horse not even turned to a good pasture; my old age assistance check does not pay enough to live on or I would run away and never come back if I could have enough to stay forever in another town.

I went to town again to get away from Ida and her biting tongue. She just can't help herself when getting on a tare to berate and belabor her fate since she envies everyone rich and powerful so thus must make me and whoever she can as miserable. I at least can see other folks in town and forget for a while the hateful Miss Ida who is on a tare.

Dewey was half drunk so I left before I got blamed again for giving him the houch and thus causing the whole thing; he must have a lot of troubles for him to try to forget so much--he really gets high and is feeling no pain as the old saying goes. Dewey says funny things and is a pleasure usually to visit with; Dewey was remembering when the airplane engine fell out of the aircraft and spilled oil all over town on a Monday when the wash everywhere was out to dry; that makes the event more personal when the oil was on everybody's clothing in some way or other. Even out in the country, Bob Winniford said that a tax should be paid the land owner for air rights when airplanes flew over; he wanted to tax dirigibles when they usta to come over so low that they nearly hit his big house and barns more than once during the 1930's; Bob Winniford said that he sent in a tax bill to the airport in Dallas asking for payment for the right to fly over his land, just like oil royalty, the rights of property should go up as far as the sky limits just like down as far as to China for the oil and water well rights. These seems more than fair to me but big rich folks will have to get on this bandwagon first before anyone will listen.

Only rich folks gets listened to seriously about anything, just like my old rich mother was able to keep a shirttail sheriff from just coming into her house after a suspected killer, just anyone would not have been able to pull that off so today the rich are like King George III in this country that just says the individual is superior to everything but only so long as that popular individual is rich. Ida is the way all people will become in this hateful world; she is the wave of the future since the city is where most people now live rather than in the rural areas; Ida hates country folks and thinks that citified ways are the best so the really big cities will soon be like Ida about the biggest cities being the best and to think that Ida is the beginning of something fierce in this country or

ours. I feel sorry for the future generations but they too will be just as mean with subtle snide remarks to survive and thus deserve each other like a fisher wife making their thorny bed all to lie in together but I do feel sorry for Bobby having to put up with Ida as his aunt and then his cousin Elsie also as his aunt; he is kin two times to that heller on wheels so he gets a double dose of those loud mouthed shrews. Seems odd that the harsh reality of a wilderness full of mean wild beasts about to kill folks or bad Indians out to kill causes white people to stick together while now that the safety of the numbers in the city only causes white folks to resent each other and thus be jealous and mean towards each other, especially members of the same family treating their own cruel is bad to survive the odds of being someone important and rich which is all that is honored by the citified folks in this dawning age of time. I would go to the moon with Buck Rogers or wherever it is that he goes since those comic books that Bobby reads tells about wonderous places to explore in the far reaches of the space travel. I don't see how that can ever come to pass even in a thousand years. But then I was surprised to see the first horseless carriage and then electricity that powers radios and the refrigerator. So all those newfangled inventions are now commonplace and not a marvel for the ones who grew up with them like for me to see all the changes plus difference in how people interact with each other from the way it usta to be. Educated people even act haughty among each other; seems that only eastern schools are true schools to attend so one has to go up east to attend a prestigous college and then on to England to be an Oxford scholar to be really respected among the eddicated as I once said till being corrected and I looked up the spelling to learn. If I lived another decade I just bet that I could become as smartassed as any big college professor that I have met. I usually check all the spelling and then type the second copy with better grammar or more correct; the first copy I still place under my mattress for Ider to think that is all I have when she snoops around to see what I have done. Ida puts all the covers back exactly as she thinks I first had them so that I will not know, but I put a thin layer of stickem or syrup on a few pages to press together to see if removed so I do know. I put the pages that I yak back or bad mouth old Ider in the back of my closet because she would sure enough throw me out on my ear and then show everyone who would gladly listen just how ungrateful I am for all her hard work.

Ida says that Little Ethel can help take care of me because life has already passed her by with her being so big and fat that no self respecting man will want to marry her along with her nasty smelling mother and herself running off any prospective suitors. That analysis is as bad a thing to say as it is for Little Ethel to be guilty of, if it is true which I do not think is so but Ider passes the word along the townsmen so that the bad gossip keeps in circulation all the time that Dude's folks are not as good as the rest of the Taylor clan. But we are all Taylors so one is no better or worse I guess than the rest. Ida though is much worse than the others as daughter in laws. She uses goodness in such a bad way but to make her self look pitiful for bearing me as a burden that the good lord has sent her weary way as I hear tell so often that I have become glad to be the extended arm of the lord as a test of her religion. I should speak for the lord and tell her a thing or two if she would believe me or even listen since never letting me inside the house to talk to any of the folks so I just stay gone as long as possible, yet Ider interrogates me as to where I have been when coming in the least bit late, as though she cares enough but only wants to bother me and drive me crazy enough to run away which I would if I had a place to go. Dude lives 3 or 4 miles south of town so I could never get in often to the pool hall or to see anybody to pass the time of

day in any pleasant sort of way if Ida had her way and she was looking more and more for just such a chance to show her power over me or anyone else who got in her way. Ida was indeed afraid that I was going to live another ten years or so. My health had really improved since being brought back to Commerce by Tom. Ida certainly missed no chance to tell Tom just how much of a meddler he was for bringing me back to Commerce.

I had tried always to stay out of the way of Ida by taking a visit to see Tom in Texarkana or just to ride the rails to see the country. I liked East Texas best of all because of the trees from Piney Woods Texarkana to Dallas which is the edge of East Texas; the southern life of plantations exists all the way below the Big Thicket with a distance of 330 miles long and 200 miles wide for lovely forests of trees and hills. South Texas valley is now citrus area and semitropical climate for the rich yankees to come to spend the winter beginning from Houston all the way to Laredo. Fort Worth is the beginning of the west and plains of the desert Southwest and where the big ranchers begin; the central part of Texas has scrub cedar trees with depressed land areas called mesa that sink down like upside mountains forming, going from Waco to Austin Hill Country back to Stephenville in a mid state area. The panhandle is a far reaches of desert or rocky place that would make its own state of being apart from the rest of Texas. Texas is a diverse place with at least five areas of distinct terrain for different kinds of land to make several states if big old Texas ever gets divided up again. And the folks in each of these five areas are very different; the dirt farmers are more like midwest Iowa farmers on the plains; the west Texas cattle raisers are more like cowboys in dress and actions; the East Texas southern folks are like the deep south of course; the south Texas Valley is lazy like a Mexican siesta time; the central part of Texas is small farmers with a businessman view crossed from southern planter arrogance mingled with a hard working ethnic view. But Galveston is a delightful city state attitude of its own and should be its own legal country. I don't like to live close to the ocean because of storms; hurricanes are worse than cyclones so I stayed away from the coast most of the year. Texas is a mixture of all people from all over the United States plus the five distinct areas of land is also a cross section of what is found in the rest of the whole United States. I would come to Texas if I had not been born here because of the adventure that remained here for so long after other places had stopped having adventure and now the oil industry is bringing the real wealth and roustabout adventurers, like myself who wanted an exciting life not a dull existence such as what would turn people sour in attitude to make them a milktoast or worse yet like Ida who knew something exciting was missing from their life but did not realize exactly what so they just took out their meanness on everybody handy. Ida really can't help herself for being the way she is since the city breeds a cooped up feeling of quiet desperation or living death like being in jail that is very large but has limits placed around that can be felt if not seen. I feel incarcerated every day of my life, especially since coming back sickly to Commerce to live with Ider and her tongue lashing ways; she resented me as much as I hated having to live there. But I got well and went my rounds to enjoy what mysteries I could still find in life; she will not have the same curiosity to enjoy life when she is old like me; Ida's wholenature has bile toward whoever she dislikes for some hostile reason that seems truly inbred in her. Just like she hated the farm and all rural things so bad that she lied and treated good folks real mean. Ida is not crazy mean like I sometimes think; she is full of good reasons for everything she does and can be depended upon to do those mean things as often as she possibly can. Ida does not just fly off the handle to do mean things; she plans them as

careful calculated means to make the dread of it as bad as the actual thing such as saying that I will be moved out long before she actually does it. Ida usta to be one to just fly off the handle and do things mean right then but she has gotten more sneaky just to make herself not look impulsive and hateful to the average good christian.

I saw Mike Self today; he named himself as a kid; he was a foundling left on the doorsteps of a well-to-do family; they refused even to call him anything until finally neighbors kept asking what is the boy's name and thusly the babe learned to talk and then answered by saying that I am me self so M.E. Self is his initial and everybody calls him Mike at the railroad where he now works; he was not sent to school but was learnt to read and write since only the bare christian duty was performed for the poor innocent child. Some folks say that that Mike Self is the illegitimate child of Professor Day at the high school and the first grad teacher Miss Pearl Helms but no proof ever existed but talk is cheap and plenty of that free stuff goes around this town as I should know. But Pearl Helms married Will DuPree who is a railroad fireman and his nephew Dale Dupree also works for the railroad. Will DuPree's sister married old Rooker who is a ignorant scoundrel to hear Ida tell the tales but she does always know all about other folks. Pearl Helms DuPree is from Josephine and her family there owns hundreds of acres of land; her mother had to raise three girls and a boy after their father died. All the girls are teachers and went to the Mayo Normal College; they have money and land so no scandal got out to hurt them; Will DuPree and Pearl had an only daughter named Daphna Dell DuPree who is a beauty so sultry like her mother but they get along like hell cats for sure. Pearl tries to boss the girl on what college courses to take and how to make the schedule just like Ida tells Ida Margaret what to take in college.

Has been a real lambasting lately because of places getting public swimming pools; the preachers call them the Devil's bathtub and they say that an innocent girl can get pregnant just swimming in waters with a lustful man. If anyone admits even to drinking a rootbeer soda, the preachers say that the youngsters bellied up to the bar and guzzled down the evil rot gut stuff. Lordy mercy at the power those preachers have to make life miserable for the average person, just wish that I had that kind of power; that's why I would become a preacher if I were young and just starting out today. Folks in the Christian Church where Ida goes do not get criticized like the Church of Christ because folks who don't know much call the Campbellites or say it Camellites for Church of Christens but Alexander Campbell founded the Christian Church and thus has nothing to do with the Church of Christ which they say was founded in 1890 but in Dallas A Church of Christ was founded in early 1850's so that is a lie but just try telling a preacher the truth when once he has said it from the pulpit in a big elegant church; bit by bit a lie gets believed over truth any day if a big shot preacher says it from a big church with stain glass.

Pearl Helms DuPree taught my Tom in the first grade and she says that she admires him a lot but she does sneaky mean things when possible by writing letters for him and then undermining what he said in the letter, like applying for a job and then Pearl went to try get the job. The devil can always look for sweet pretty folks to do his work as the preachers like to say about me, only I am not pretty and so sweet.

Tom owned a roofing business and sold Texaco composition roofing that required letters so Pearl wanted to help out and did she ever try to do him in when given the chance to double cross Tom. Good folks can just do

the worst things to each other in the name of goodness while saying they will help you out so it is best to learn how to do everything for yourself. Bavy makes her resent that something prosperous might come someone else's way.

I still get free rides on the passenger trains when Pappy Harrison is the brakeman on a run; he just lets me get on and go with him to Dallas or to Texarkana which ever way he is going. Sometimes I just barely get on the train as he suggest now to go and I do but Ider doesnot mind as long as I am gone out of her hair; she likes to say that I will fall and get killed by the wheels of the train but I never try to get on unless I am told to and then the train is stopped. Roemer Harrison is a brother to Pappy and Roemer is a big singer of gospel songs around; he is a robust man who is usually pleasant and tries to be a genuine man of his word to everyone. Somefolks dislike him because he seems a lady's man who is out on the prowl but that is some old wag who wants to have an affair with him. Gossip is a better entertainment than the radio soap operas and on a Saturday night in Commerce folks just go to park on the square or the store fronts to watch people go by and then criticize the dress of some of the hicks as the rural hard working folks get called by the elegant acting high hatted folks in town. The redneck element though does mean things to everyone when they can sneak around to your back to get away with it; they are cunning as a snake with their shit eating grin when posing to do you a favor while actually taking advantage of you. Such grinning rednecks like to sell a load of barnyard that is full of old Johnson grass seeds while saying that oh no nothing bad in in that good fertilizer. Makes a redneck feel so smart to outsmark a well dressed person, makes them feel important to do that and the rednecks love to be very religious talking and acting; they really do go to the Baptist church because the idea that you can't fall from grace once saved by the Baptist Church means they can just keep on outfoxing the good city slickers till Hell freezes over and then still be good christians. Now, you see why I would be a Baptist preacher if I was young starting out in life today. Rednecks and fundamentalists go together like red eye gravy spread all over left over bread. Baptists tell each other how to vote too especially the preachers go around so mealy mouthed to inform which candidate that is preordained to win; they never just keep their mouths shut and wait to see exsotly what God's will is since they are the lord's agents sent to involk his way upon the world that is supposed to be all predestinated in the first place to hear them preach away on the lord's will. I wish to hell they would keep their mouths shut about voting and giving money to their causes because God appeared to them in a vision; Jesus Christ has personally appeared to all the preachers and goodies two shoes folks in this county. I am surprised that Jesus Christ has time to go anywhere else in the whole world. Yet so many bad things happen in Commerce for Jesus Christ to make such regular appearances to set things straight in so many lives while letting rape, murder and thefts just keep on happening; seems that some voodoo superstitious religion exists in the white folks lives so the niggers aren't the only scarey hoodooed religious folks around this place.

The Nigger Holler is a pleasant place to hear the singing and loud celebrations like Juneteenth for their freedom. But the white boys in Commerce usta to throw rocks and old coal that fell off the trains at any other nigger boy who dared to cross over the tracks into the white town; no wonder the races now hate each other and do such mean things in turn. I would have been whipped within an inch of my life if I had hurt or harmed in any way young Boyce back on Cherry Wood but then we did not have all the loud preachers telling us the way to act; we just read the Bible and then tried to do what the good book said. All that has changed very much

in my time when preachers are worshipped more than the good book itself if the preacher dresses like a million dollars and speaks in the tones of a highpriestess. I can't believe how pompous the religious folks have become to use Church as a place to show off finery of clothing, jewelry and hats of course. Even perfume is a stint if one can stand it for the smells are almost good enough to eat. Preachers talk their sermons to death until they get the effects deserved, that's why folks give in just to shut up the harping. Just like the swimming pool is the devil's bathtub so the swimming suit is satan's girdle; seems that preachers have a very clever name for all the sinful things to get attention but also to be so distinction so that everyone will refer to their sermons as being smart and very astute as one high felluting preacher described himself to me when I questioned him; he said he had already heard about my skepticism so the official word is out on me and I did not know it.

Hardly anyone in the family ever talks to me for any length of time so I have to go to town or ride the rails to have social contact with anyone and that is why Ida wants to make me move out into the country with Dude so that my jaunts into town will be out short if ever at all. Ida is determined to make me pay double indemnity for everything bad that she perceives that I have ever done, and she blames all Will's bad habits on me; all the shortcomings that my children have are blamed on me because I neglected them and ruined their lives or so the old saw goes by Ider.

I can always tell when Ida has gotten next to the little ones to tell them how bad I have been and still am. The kids have to be carefully taught to hate so it shows on their face and the way they look at me like I am some kind of ogger when before they laughed and smiled to see me before Ida's brand of truth got seared all over the place. Even Little Bobby who tells Ida that he prefers being at the farm rather than at her house is beginning to look at me like I am some kind of monster for he has been told all kinds of things as I once overheard but he doesn't like Ida at all and does what he wants about things she urges not to be done. The old Taylor spirit comes through every time; we are a stubborn lot true to our Scotland heritage to be what we want not for others.

Ida says that Bobby is tied to the apron strings but he does not obey her whims or take subtle suggestions of hers so she has just got to say mean things instead of holding her old cold tongue like the shrew she is.

I have never been able to find out what happened to my Laura Estelle's nigger Mammie. No one will talk about what I want to hear when I am allowed to overhear the conversation. Someday everyone who has withheld information and civility to me will live to be treated the way they have treated me because they aren't themselves rich enough to get respect when their petty usefulness is over; they will get discarded by the next young generation just like I have been. I will not be around to see it all which is what I would like to witness. Life is not fair and I have always known that living by the wits is the only way to succeed even though I do not have much money now; I did buy oil stock long ago but it got lost when I was sick in Graham, Texas when Tom came to get me on Labor Day of 1932. I could have been richer than my old mother and I did indeed want to be wealthy when I was younger and going to Indian Territory even to find a gold mine if possible as I once thought was in the hills of Oklahoma. I enjoyed the adventure of it all and would not take a fortune for the vast memories of all those travels and different kinds of races of people that I lived with and knew so well. But money in the bank is the only real accepted symbol for success in life among the good christians here in this

place called Commerce. But I did have a potential fortune for all of my five children; I had a million shares of oil stock for each of my children that I had bartered over the years when the young companies sprang up in the oil fields where the black gold came in and I built the derricks out of wood for pay in stock and a place to live with a little cash for daily needs. I always lived close so that was no bother with no place to spend my pay since I made my own houches out of berries and wild Indian peaches because I preferred the home made stuff the better to taste than ready made expensive stuff. Ida would really have to eat her words if I had not lost those oil shares. I think that she would have a heart attack if I were to have a fortune to leave her and Will; she would take it though. I would then be a prince among men to her, I am sure for I know just how much high society and the wealthy mean to Ida and all her kinfolks.

I still have no idea what happened to the pieces of paper with all that stock shares written on it; someone sure enough got it because there is a dead nigger in the woodpile somewhere and nobody I know from those times suddenly got big rich like I would have read about and they sure enough could not have hidden all that wealth for long. Surely those paper shares did not get burnt up or lost, maybe hidden under some floorboards for that was the favorite banking place for most folks even after getting rich to put valuables under a boarded up place. That is truly a buried treasure someplace out in Graham at the boarding house where I stayed those last few months even after my cash ran out and word was sent for my sons to come get me, so that must be the reason somekind of responsibility was felt to send me home so to speak but yet all that wealth of millions of shares has not ever turned up to make someone very rich as a robber baron but then perhaps only my saved cash was the known object for the gradual theft of my funds then and the paper stock was not known to exist by my good benefactors when I was so sick back then.

Just as I almost a gold mine in Oklahoma found then I almost a fortune earner to give all my children. Another gold mine of Indian legends was supposed to be near the Red River just across from Texas. The one that I nearly found for sure was in the western part in the mountains that the Indians worshipped as the fingers of the great spirit in yellow sunlit streaks of rocky formations. I would go back if I were able to find my way but all the old landmarks are changed by the farmers who must uproot everything as a sign of progress. Destruction is the way of the redneck element in the name of God's scheme to reward the followers of his one and only chosen religion. No wonder most of the rednecks flock to the fundamentalist churches where a very ignorant approach is taken to justify every savage act by white men to cheat the Indian plus to steal in the name of God from whoever gets in their way since they can't fall from grace. This kind of religion will destroy America for that is not the freedom of religion that the founding fathers favored; Ben Franklin was a deist, not a Baptist or Church of Christ. God lets heresy exist for a long time as a lesson to humanity who will someday rise up and destroy those churches for the evil they do in the name of goodness. I shall not live to see the justice come. I can't believe how the individual is controlled by the religious redneck element who quotes scripture when they themselves use others for a selfish reason and then just go to the mourners' bench to repent if a public sin gets noised abroad so then the cycle just gets done all over again and again by the same old reprobates as long as they attend church and cater to the rich folks in a very social way; I am too much my own man to sin that way. I hate duplicity more than anything else in the world; treachery of dishonesty is worse than out and out physical assault that savage Indians would do when offended but lying is a dirty dog thing

to do to anyone but most of all to the self that does it; lying becomes a trend or habit that blurs the truth and the actual lie as one and the same never to know the difference so I try not to lie because knowing all the details of the truth can be difficult enough to remember such as I have realized now that I am writing this memoir thing. It takes a lot of time just to remember all the things and the order gets turned around as some more details come back to mind.

Just like old time visits to the Winniford family is ually so much fun that I forget all the details; the bad things are like indelible ink in my mind, that's why Ida gets so much attention in this writing of mine; she makes me angry every day and I can only get back at her through this writing. Well, one spring I was visiting out at Winniford Way when a cyclone came; it was middle of the afternoon when everything turned dark and still as kingdom come; that was dark thirty as the folks said when going into the old storm cellar; they kept an axe and had lots of canned preserves down there to sustain them in case the house got tumbled down on top of the cellar door. Well, all of us went except for Tom; he never liked small dark places he said; suddenly we heard heavy timbers hitting the tin covered door of the cellar; everyone began saying which building that must be falling to pieces on the cellar. Then Aunt Texana Teliffered Alexander looked up the air vent and saw the sunlight coming through so she holler that Tom Taylor has joked us good and proper. We all raced to the steps upto the doorway and pushed it up so we could all leave. Tom was laughing up a storm and slapping his knees when we ran out and then we started throwing sticks of stove wood at him, chunking me good and proper for once to have our share of fun. Tornadoes come down the lane and up the driveway regular as clockwork and then circle the house, only the lift the ceiling and empty buckets of water inside like washing the wallpaper right off the boards but the house never got blown away because of the A shaped slant of the wall planks rather than merely up and down or across; the A slant design lets the house rock and rock back and forth like a ship sailing in the wind to keep from falling apart. Old time people built the place, not some smartypants architect who does not do his own work. All people should work with their hands in order to understand the real meaning of work and thus to relate to other people.

Writing this journal shows me just how much pleasure a real writer of books must feel from his work; I should have started earlier in life. I also no longer reread what I type with my hunt and peck system because I would change everything and leave somethings out plus I would never get very far; I did at first rewrite and retype and even asked some college professors about grammar and punctuation but now I just consult Webster's dictionary when in doubt enough to check it all out. I should take more time to use the dictionary but I don't as I do have to be quiet in typing so as not to bother Ida; the QT is what I have to observe in Ida's house that she bosses so much and so well.

Walking on eggs is what it takes to survive around Ider; she is a hell out for sure. Ida's brother Waldo Salmon is a lot like her as he can't be trusted to do the right thing about sneaky things; he will lie in a railroad investigation of an accident to make himself look good at anyone else's expense; he works for the Cotton Belt along with the rest of most folks around here in Commerce. His daughter Bobbie is sweet and plays with Elizabeth when Weldon's brings her over to see Ida; they all leave a wide birth around Ida who lets you know when she wants or does not want the family coming around so I am lucky to be ignored most of the time by Ider's wrath that everyone sooner or later gets to know first hand

her fury. Like no body's business Ida can attack before you even know she has got started on you. It is a social chess game of stinging remarks when around Ida. No one can disagree with Ida and survive socially in this town. She rules with an iron hand those who come her way; it is a good thing that she ain't rich.

Dude's sons are making preachers; his son George III's took my advice that a young man should be a prescher today in this non reading of the Bible society who yet worship the Bible that they do not read carefully.

Ignorance is wholesale in that meanness is used the express what these good christians do in the name of goodness that can be so bad and not at all compassionage such as shunning cancer folks as being contagious or punished by God for some hidden sins. Even polio is feared as being caused by getting too hot in the sun; parents keep their childred inside away from the heat of the day; no wonder so many fatties are now becoming most evident. Fear gets expressed in the strangest ways by the good christian folks all done in the name of God; they even say polio is God's wrath on those folks; I was only ever sick bad once in this long life of mine so I must have never done anything to make God mad at me, according to that kind of superstitious thinking or worship of idols that punish folks, to keep everyone scared to death of a mean daddy God; it gauls Ida that I am well. At least the folks kin to Ella Winniford Taylor do not sit around blaming God for everything good and bad; that must be why Ida does not like them and too they are Church of Christ members. I went back out to visit and to listen to some good violin music being made there. Their cousin Charles T. Alexander was there; they looked at the old family album pictures; they had a copy of the old newspaper from Springfield, Illinois that advertised the heirs of Urbane Alexander notice that was run to show that his four children had lived to inherit his land in Texas. And also they showed me the folded up five dollar confederate bill among the family deeds; a similar Confederate bill was sent to Abe Lincoln by Sarah Alexander Winniford to let him know that some of his good friends lived down South. Her parents Mary Brennan Alexander and Urbin or Urbane attended each other's weddings; Mary Brennan even almost married Abe Lincoln according to the family legends; Abe looked her straight in the eye all the time that his vows were being said or so they tell when showing the mementoes. Urbin served under the command of Abe Lincoln during the Black Hawk Indian Wars in 1830's. The tales of going to Texas was a long story full of how they brought flower seeds in their pockets to plant when they got here, only to find many more varieties of plants growing in Texas.

Their stories were full of awe about the olden hardships but all was not so different from the trek into Oklahoma that killed Jennie. I have seen a lot of changes; The Great American Desert is what everyone called the vast desolate place westward to California, even Oklahoma was considered part of that great American desert. The whole country is getting so small and pseudocivilized that nothing appears as it really is; the names for things get changed such as the Great American Desert is no longer called that; separate deserts now are given on the radio like Mojave Desert in California. People also just get in a car and flit out there or where ever it is they want to go, just like I can jaunt to Dallas and back on the passenger train so easily, all in one day. I now go when I get the chance because there just may not be much time left to gad about. I grab my hat and go when anyone says go; my middle name is go according to Ida.

I though spend a lot of time in Dewey's barber shop next to the News Stand where everybody comes and goes during the day to buy news or to

meet there and pass along local news. No place to sit in there so I had rather stay inside the barber shop but Dewey doesn't have the best of business to get lots of folks inside. I let him cut my donut of a hair out every month whether it needs it or not just to patronize old Dewey.

Ida even offered to cut my hair by putting a bowl over the head and trimming around the edges with a scissors just the way most folks usta to do years ago when I was young. But I don't trust Ida to trim just hair for my ears would get in her way, I am sure.

Commerce has grown a lot; the streets get longer all the time into the countryside that once ended at a pasture that is now growing houses. I guess the farmland will someday have only people in houses and then how will food be grown? But I will not live to see that time come around. The train whistle sounds notice to everyone who does not have a watch, but nearly everyone has a watch now a days. The train whistle sounds mournful and so sad yet announces the hour as regular as the evening star does its timely duty. But one farmer East of town late one night hopped onto the cab of the engine with a shotgun and got the attention of the engineer as he was about to pull the string for the whistle again; he does don't ever do that at night again to wake me up since I have to milk cows long before dawn and thus go to bed as soon as it is dark so as to save fuel costs to light a lamp and then you come along to awake me so don't make me shoot you for that bad habit of yourin. Ida thought that was funny as did I but if I had done that the sheriff would have been called; I would have been taken to the funny farm at Terrill and looked away forever, yet that old fellow was not even arrested. The radio does not have as funny things happening as the old coddgers themselves do around here. But I do like listening to the radio.

People sit on the curbs downtown to watch the world go by and to talk to whoever will stay a spell with them; I have a lot of folks to share my tales with and to listen to theirs. Some men chew and spit on the curb till the sidewalk gets so slippery that anyone will fall flat even when tip toeing by; little Bobby and Ella once went by and the kid fell flat into the slime so his mother took him gingerly by the tip of the fingers to lead home to change out of his tobaccoer spit stained Sunday clothes. Thus city ordinances had to be passed to fine anyone spitting on the sidewalk. Breaking a law is all that good christians understand rather than being considerate enough to keep a place clean, but those old time religion believers of predestination said that one did not have to worry about such filth because God would call you when your time came so need to worry or fret about such things. Being a christian is a license to be filthy and inconsiderate because only God has the right to tell you anything; never have I seen such warped religious beliefs so I really do want to become a preacher man if I was young like Dude's boys are doing. God must really be rolling around in heaven laughing at some folks ideas or interpretation of the word of God in the good book. I still plan to use death bed repentance to anger Ida that I will get into heaven at the last minute while she had had to attend church all the time and be bored by the long benedictions that have burned her lunches when the deacons will not say amen and just go on home to eat. Ida has been known just to learn when the appointed time to remove a roast from her oven came due; I don't blame her a bit but good christians aren't supposed to do that sort of thing.

Ida has gotten very curious about my typing because of the noise so I have continued to make two copies; she will destroy my diary mainly because of what I have said about her but also just to be cantankerous about

everything in this world that my hands have touched. I know her well. I would skedaddle out of here if I could but I got no money and no place else to go in my old age. Elsie really got mad when she found out about what her father in law Bob Winniford did; he deeded all but 23 acres of his land to his 3 daughters jointly, leaving his 2 sons and their fealty wives out in the cold, disinherited because of all the troubles caused.

Beryl married Horace Winniford just for his money or prestige in the community; she was a Ward and her mother was a Wolfe with lots of kin folk in the county too. Beryl married Horace and they moved into the north bedroom that had been Horace's and Beryl expected that the whole place would be turned over to her; Maggie Winniford had to tell Beryl that the daddy Bob was still very much alive and still owned this place that had belonged to his own grandfather, even though it was 1930 and the heart of the depression Beryl expected the world to be turned over to her; she even stood in front of the mirror and preened herself by saying, "I know that I am pretty because my mirror tells me so." Such gall is beyond me for I would have kicked her butt out the door.

But good hearted old Bob Winniford put up with all that guff in the name of his family peaceful coexistence. All his relatives were welcome to return the good life out there and to be welcome to visit again the place that had belonged to their common grandfather. Thus, Dr. Charles T. Alexander of Dallas now had grown up there; his mother being Aunt Texans Telafferric Alexander whom we all called Aunt Tex; the good doctor was reputed to have once been ashamed of his countrified old mother when he first went to the big city and became the toast of the town; citified folk sneered at rural folks as being inferior in dress and manners as well as all other mental traits, none of which is true but glorious acting folks got to belittle others to make themselves look big as that is why white folks berate black folks in the name of racism to elevate themselves above someone else. Charles T. finally realized that his mother and all his relatives were the only real folks in his life so he returned to the fold. That's why he composes those artistic acrostics about everyone on any special occasion. His sister Ivey Males also returns with her 2 children for all the holidays at the old country place.

Elsie was so mad about the deeded land because she had planned to contest a will to cause trouble and she got outfoxed for once. Elsie had once said to Lynna Winniford that when your daddy dies you will not be so high and mighty anymore; life will not be so good for you then as you will learn like everyone else has had to take second best or worse out of life. Elsie tipped her own hand in a fit to be miss smartygents over others.

Elsie really had a tongue on her when she got started. She always looked very thoughtful or pensive like she was plotting something if you knew her like I did or that she was just sad like someone dear had just died. Elsie was a killjoy herself when she decided to be mean as hell.

Family can be the worst thing in the world to anyone when they decide to throw a damper on things and yet family is the only worthwhile thing in life to bring joy and rewards to my children which is the best things that can happen to a parent is to see good things happening to the children and the grandchildren. But if I had my life to live over, I would not marry and thus have no children at all and I would travel to Europe to live, by going back to Scotland to be a true Scotchman. I would never do anything twice if I had the chance to do it all over because life has so many fabulous and different things to offer the one who will seek the adventures of life

that is offered; it would take a thousand life times to do many of the more interesting things that this old world has to offer. I would not do anything different in this old long life of mine because I would just go do something else rather than repeat what I have already done.

I sit in on college classes to learn something about writing and grammar; I mainly though learned how to use the dictionary a lot and how to use the library to find knowledge or examples but then the professors are helpful when shown an example of sentences to punctuate or grammar use. Doctor Butler was the one that I sat in on; he looks grouchy and very serious; I wanted to be in Doctor Wiley's classes; she seems serious but not so gruff to make you afraid to ask a question later, but I was quiet as a mouse with so many young folks there knowing so much it seemed to me. Ida didn't learn that I went to some classes till much later and then she laughed at me for wasting my time as she called it but she always wants me out of her way or out of her hair she complains till I do something that gets me out of thehouse; ain't no pleasing that woman or as I told Ida, well, just excuse me for living since I just fell out of a hearse.

College kids do lots of foolhardy things like the annual fall festival or homecoming game bonfire; they go all over town collecting lumber or whatever is not tacked down to burn; I brought an old chair that was then placed on the very tip top by a young whippersnapper before igniting the whole thing; it was five stories high the frat brothers bragged; they are called clubs now on campus because of being outlawed to have fraternities in Texas because of hazing that killed some important state official's child. The dorms have penty raids sometimes just to fool around they say. That is too sexy stuff for educated folks to allow; sex should be only for procreation; it is not a recreational thing and such wild use will lead to the fall of any great country like old Rome was fallen by such hanky panky stuff. Seems that college kids are not too serious about an education when they do stuff like this and just waste their parent's money and trust. Kids need supervision at college just as bad as when in high school because they don't grow up till in their mid twenties now.

"Religion keeps rearing its nosy head in Commerce; the Church of Christ members always stand up to say that Christmas is not truly known as Jesus Christ's Birthday because the exact date is unknown; it was either late April or October when the Roman census was taken and they went to the city to register; most likely was April from what I have read and heard tell by folks who read up on such things.

The yearly bonfires are also a waste of good timbers; kids today do not realize the premium that finished lumber was back when everyone had to go to Jefferson to buy finished boards and then haul it back even to old Commerce town until after World War I. To burn planks in a public bonfire is a waste that is sinful; should be in a stove to keep warm or at least to roast a pig or calf for a get together. I don't understand the waste of the pampered folks today who think that they do not have it so easy when they have life so easy; they would have died on the frontier up in Oklahoma Territory. The young are spoiled and think that a car is a necessity not a luxury to own today; I am shocked at their expectations.

Life is going to be a surprise for a lot of college graduates someday when they encounter the real world or else I am indeed old and out of place as Ida likes to tell me. Time will tell. I will just not be around to know the results and I don't care except that I will want to stay as long as possible to give Ida the bad time that she deserves and seems to expect

from me herself. Ida says that I will be the death of her but it is the other way around for sure. Ida is always on a high horse about something; Elsie is also like her mother by being on the warpath about something. They talk ugly about so many folks for no real reason at all; Jude's folks being so fat are the main target of their ire when nothing else big or bad enough is happening such as Ida saying that a fattie is digging his own grave with his teeth when really meaning little Ethel and her mother. Ethel is an ardent christian who seldom misses church yet that is not good enough to keep Ida from saying mean things so brute force is used to spread God's justice as Ida calls what she does rather than using prayer to effect God's will and then waiting for the turn of events; brute force controls christian events and oh how the brute forceful christians inflict their brand of small ideas on everyone; the brutal christians can't get more than one idea at a time into their small world of thinking; no one is allowed to disagree with them without being slurred as evil and devil worshippers for they are always on the side of good and thus speak for God who oddly never speaks for himself; I am waiting for God to howl from the heavens with heavy gusts of his breath knocking down the false prophets who speak for the lord, so well as we all have to endure their prettles from thehousetops.

My life has not been so idle and so incomplete that I resent all who have done something positive and useful. Being busy is the key to being happy and christians are the most unhappy folks in the world because they have denied themselves so much fun that they hate those who do have fun and thus decry whatever is done by those they envy actually. So many of the good christians always find fault with any idea to do anything in a different way from what has always been done; the conservative hates change and thus hates those who change anything that the status quo mind has found a way to control society and other people; thus, change must not be made because progress would put them out of business or out of power. I am glad that I lived to see the republicans ousted from power after so many decades of their rule with the robber barons getting possession of most of the public lands for right of way for their railroads; they even yet get to graze the public forests with their cattle for a small fee; I read the reports of their free ride while the rich hate that any assistance is given to the poor or less fortunate; the commandment to help the poor is given only lip service by the rich who think they are the ones who should be given the tax breaks and big contracts by the government; the government now has a war machine that will rival the evil done by the war lords of old Japan and that war machine is called the pentagon which will dominate the budget one of these days just like ancient Greece was ruined as a true democracy when the 30 tyrants gained control of the treasury back then; history repeats itself because greed is always alive and well in the hearts of mankind. The frontier has disappeared for a place to escape the force of the politicians so nothing but major problems will continue to exist for America in the future as I see it. Wars are big business so the pentagon will really become the main big business of this country, to replace the old big bankers and robber barons with their railroads and auto companies. We will have many short wars to keep the big business of defense contracts flowing from Washington and that will be the main concern of the new robber barons of the future. The rich own and control the government. The small everyday person has not got a chance of a snowball in hell to be heard or taken seriously for long by the selfish politicians.

I should write a novel about the development of our republic into a hierarchy of robber barons who use freedom as a word to enslave the people. But I do not even reread this diary of mine anymore or I would not continue

adding a page now and then to this growing book length epistle about my family life. I read editorials in the Dallas News and get mad as hell at the stupidity of the readers who do not know the facts; they can't take information and then use it. Fewer and fewer newspapers exist now than when I was young because the big business of advertisements has caused the small towns to close out their papers; every pig trail town had a newspaper back in the old days and was run by the only literate person in town who did all the work of writing and typesetting to boot but now folks are too lazy to do all the work themselves and not then get rich at it so the reporting of news gets done by the specialized interests of the big rich owners of the large newspapers who bias everything to fit their moneyed interests. The big rich robber barons cause criminals and the seige of crime that follows; the white collar big rich get to rob people with poor quality of products that go to court for a lengthy battle over what is quality or not while they continued to fleece the average person and thus the vested interest owner gets richer so the average man like Jesse James has to rob trains to get back at the railroads and that his why he was a robin hood hero to the folks back then while railroad right of ways were obtained by forcing folks to sign releases and then Sam Bass in Texas was a product of the times against the big rich and then Bonnie and Clyde in Dallas area and all about the neighboring states was a hero symbol too. The bankers in the 1930's did themselves in with all the greed they had during the 1920's to get much richer. When the white collar vested interest can legally get by with unfair taxation and product quality then the average folks have to get back at the system that permits it all. God made all the folks but only greedy evil folks made capitalism the way it is and that is not God's plan for he said that a rich man was to give up all that he had and then follow Christ plus it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into heaven. That fact of scripture surely does make the materialistic christians angry for they say God rewards wealth only to the good christians. Just like God is finally not a republican and must surely be a democrat or at least was a lover of Franklin Delno Roosevelt whom he rewarded so well with personal wealth and then so many reelected terms of office; in fact Delno should have been a republican because of his wealth; his mother was mean enough for the whole family to be redeemed from republican hoodlignism; she hated the common man and made no bones about it and was at least honest about it. I was once haughty like that when back on Cherry Wood with all the wealth and negroes doing all the work for us high and mighty rich folks but that soon passed; I did not care to steal in order to continued the high life and thus not have the good life anymore by havin' to work for my way in life. I did try to find the gold mines in Oklahoma Territory though and did not; they are still there just waiting for someone's revelation as the Indians know and will let the secret out someday when not realizing that greed still controls the capitalist system of this country. I had rather be rich than poor like I am now since I have been both ways; I prefer to be poor early in life and then get rich to afford comforts in the old age since I do remember well the good life and now have to look back on every thing with disgust, especially at old Ida and her ornery ways. I still think that niggers belong in their segregated places now that so much meannice exists between the races; hatred is obvious between white and the blacks because of the hallow promise of freedom to be equal has not come about for the freedmen afterall. They are kept in economic slavery to be cheap labor source like the Mexicans from old Mexico do work that even a nigger won't do nowadays. The rich want a nearby pool of cheap labor for their housework and industrial related jobs so that union wages will not be paid to everyone; white folks have been worked for a dollar a day when two dollars a day was needed just to get by until unions came along. The old labor boss wants cheap labor for all his jobs no matter the color or the

moral outrages for a fair wages for a fair days work. Money rules the every decision of businessmen rather than being ethical or not when a dollar is concerned, just getting shold of the money without being an obvious SOB is the aim and the money is its own reward for being; the average folks vote their pocketbook sense when they can figure a dollarwise angle for themselves. Religion is now big business so that is the real money game in town today. All the talk about God is a false front for the real God of this country is mamas or money. Some superstitious folks think that only prayer will heal and then some zealots believe that if a special person has the power of God he can work miracles such as a person who was born shortly after one of their parents died and thus did not ever see one of their parents that this Thrash Doctor as the blind faithd ones believe can heal sick babies. Ella's father Bob Winniford was born very shortly after his own father died so people from miles around would bring their sick babies for him to exhale deep into their screaming mouths. These Thrash Doctors as the oldtimers called them came into demand because the babies tossed about in the crib with a fever that didn't get well so the superstitious christians would try anything and then when the child did get better that was the work of God through the Thrash Doctor. Bob Winniford did not believe such things as he told the parents at the time he breathed into the sickly mouth; he got all kinds of fevers himself over the years himself because contagious diseases were spread that way by the ignorant christians who said God would not let a good person get sick when trying to do a good thing. I would have belched into their faces if I had been asked and it is odd that I too qualify for such Thrash doctoring but no one expects that of me and I am glad it never happened for I was always outspoken and above such simple minded ignorance. Faith in this healing means everything to the superstitious fools and blind faith is all that their religion is about; God has been given so many names for his church when the scriptures say that only one faith and one lord and one baptism is all there is so that is either the Roman Catholic Church that was truly the only Christian church for fifteen centuries until the reformation or the fundamentalist Church of Christ which is the only church that uses the name of Jesus Christ as its bridehead nomenclature is the real one so all the other churches are a waste of time and sinful digressions as I like to tell Ida and other big time preachers; they get huffy when I get haughty about it. Even the idea that the one cup for the wine or fruit of the vine sacrament of the last supper makes the truly faithful angry because they claim that God would not let a germ be spread when the whole congregation sips from the same cup even when everyone has a cold or whatever for who knows where their hands have been as my old mother admonished anyone who did not wash their hands often. But I have noticed that most of the fundamentalist churches even now have a tray of small liquid cups full of grape juice or fruit of the vine to offer when passing around now since radio ads have been pushing cold medicine nose sprays and newspapers ads mention cold remedies so the idea of germs has began to hit home for the superstitious christians to believe that God can't be everywhere every day of every minute to protect the godly from fevers and colds. God's will be done is just another way of justifying the ruthless way mankind mistreats each other; the state laws that say an act of God when rivers flood or a cyclone twister destroys property makes the lord a mean and angry old man. But fear is one of the best ways to fill churches to overflowing and thus to keep the tithes coming in to feather the nest of the contractors who get to build additions to the churches and then get to repair the big old edifices all the time; tis big business to keep a big church going besides the preachers salary. I wish that I was a big time evangelist preacher man who could tell the people a thing or two about what to do in this life of

self righteous public showoff christians. I am just an old codger full of wishful wrath on the two faced blowhards in this place called Commerce when they get to be stuffed shirts about saying that I neglected my children; I never get to live down what I did or get to put it behind me like all these goodie two shoes types in this town called Commerce. God has become hygienic as I like to tell the one-up believers about their churches have lost the good fight now that modern man has become civilized and finally reads the reports that insurance companies put out about the big killers to set the death rates. God has changed his mind several times in my life time about so many things as the different preachers begin to pass their brand of religion as the truth. Each church acts like they only talk to God; the Baptists say they were started by John the Baptist who was a cousin to Jesus Christ; Elizabeth and Mary were of the House of Aaron; the Daughters of Aaron is like the DAR organization in this country; the old testament of the Priesthood of Aaron compares to the coming priesthood of Jesus Christ so this is the lineal descendant of King David that Jesus Christ was also kin to on his mother's earthly side of the family; thus, Christ's mother was not a peasant woman at all but the blood of kings flowed in her veins, yet preachers like to read that a peasant woman was the mother of Christ. Not so if only the publicans would only read the scriptures that they say they worship so well. I just wonder what the preachers have up their sleeves for distorting the genealogy of Jesus with a peasant woman lineage being mentioned so often; seems that the role of aristocracy is out of fashion so the ignorant redneck preachers want to equate Christ with their own lowly birth but Jesus Christ was a prince from the royal house of Judea on his mother's side; she was a princess in the true sense of the word but not on a throne. The Bible is full of more clues than you can shake a stick at for the reader to learn this true lineal descent for Mary and thus Christ her son; I just wonder what is up their sleeve to say an untruth like that fact. To pay the tax and thus be counted in the census was when Christ was born in the city of David.

I would be tickled to death to learn why some religious lies get perpetuated. It makes my nose get out of joint when good christians lie. I just get bent all out of shape as Ida complains when I make a good point. Ida says that I whiled away my youth on an old plantation is why that I just always want seeking after the golden dream of doing what I darned well pleased and that I deserve to be down at the heels and poor like I am so deserving. Well hath no furty like a woman scorned when the hellacious Ida gets on a tare. The hit dog hollers the loudest is what I say about what Ider giving me a bad time because she is angry that she has to live all her life in this small town of Commerce and did not get to see much of the exciting world even though I did get to know Indians or Injuns as most white folks called them back in the good old days of hard work. Ida does not let bygones be bygones for me; I had a buschel of fun with my life so Ider is mad as a wet hen for sure and jealous that she never had any. It is high time that someone told the truth about Miss fleshy Ida. Ida just talks out of both sides of her mouth at once when complaining about why she hates taking care of me and thus having to put up with me; Ida really enjoys getting the chance to say mean ugly things under her breath for me to overhear and pretend otherwise or she would throw me out and then I could not go to town everyday if I lived with Dude way out in the country. I don't have to make the same mistake but twice when learning to avoid Ida I have been stung by her harsh tongue often enough to just remain quite like a whipped hound dog turning over on the stomach to take another lash or two while her sadistic good christian tongue keeps going by talking out of both sides of her mouth to make me look evil while she says how good she is to keep me around. What's eating Ida is to eat me out every chance

she can get to pick my bones to pieces. I will have my day on her as every dog has his day sooner or later. And I will have a ripsnorting good time of it too. I would beat the daylights out of her if I could. I don't have one red cent so Ida doesn't feel compelled to be nice to me. Money is her god for sure as many good christians worship mammon for sure.

Well, I met my first queer in Commerce that I knew for sure; the gossip had said several fellas were weirdos before but I got mixed up with one who grabbed me in my privates like no body's business and he was very shocked that I wasn't pleased to death over it all like he was. He liked old guys he said and would take care of me just beautifully like no woman ever could or would; I am sure he was right about that but I am too old to learn new tricks so I grabbed ahold of my pants and fled the scene. I was out at the college library restroom and just had to go or wet my pants so I ran inside the place to take a leak and man oh man that odd ball was there in the stall ready to jump me. He was a nice looking young man who could get a date with most any woman so I asked him why me. He said that he liked both and that I was just his cup of tea as he had been watching me in the library and was just waiting his chance to contact me. I just begged his pardon and went my way. Ida thought it was outrageous and kinda funny since she said I was such a refrabate that she was shocked that I did not go along. Seems that goodie two shoes false christians think that only they are worthy to be outraged and really good or above certain sins. I just drink and carouse some, no out and out sinning for me. I am too old to keep such secrets. I did not reveal the name of the queer or even describe him even though Ida grilled me almost to death to learn the identity so that she could telephone all her friends and tell them. Ida told the episode for sure as I overheard her laughing about it on the phone. I never went back at that exact time anymore so I was sure to avoid the queer.

I went to a luncheon or tea at the college; folks ate like a humming bird with small bites and acting like the food was so good while yet never eating anything much. I was there making hay on the little sandwiches when I suddenly realized that eating for pleasure was not a wise thing to do; no wonder that modern folks are so mean to each other in a back handed clever way as they resent having to hold back their real urges to eat while yet having to be nice acting. Not very people are down to earth at these functions I soon learned since I went to a dozen or so over a period of a couple of years. Tis no wonder that modern folks act so strange now that I know what's eating them when they must pretend not to be hungry or at least not to eat much of the food; it was not too good but was better than nothing; I have a cast iron stomach though so nothing bothers me that is not spoilt. I only go to these functions because of nothing better to do.

I have lived long enough to have seen it all or so I thought till the picky eaters and the queer bait happened to me. I was always too tired from long hard work in the wilderness to notice anything like that in all my sheltered years or so Ida claimed was the reason that I was shocked; she never let me forget that episode as that was the source for a chuckle when she saw me sitting in my room on a rainy cold day. I just ignore her funny remarks.

I go to the bookstore next to Dewey's barber shop when I get tired of hearing his old harangue; the same old seven and six all the time. I avoid being too long at any one place so they will not get tired of me and think me a nuisance as most old people outstay their welcome if it ever existed. Old folks either get treated really overly nice or just plain ignored. Ida does not ignore me as I would prefer most of the time if

she can get in an extra dig. Ida still laughs at my resistance to the queer because she thinks that I have no morals at all since I do not have the same warped sense of ethics that she has. The queer said that he liked young women and then old men like me; he said a complete change of pace was what he liked and that those varied options gave me more chances of a good time and thus more fun things to talk about. Wow, if I live to be a thousand I will never cease to be amazed and shocked. Just when I think that I have seen everything then something else comes along to make me marvel at it all.

The college classes do have a lot of grown men in them. The government VA program has enabled an education for many more men than ever before in our history so that is a good Democratic party thing to do; some of the men let their wives do all the library work research and thus do not really learn anything from their schooling experience. Some girlfriends do all the class attendance even and of course the homework and turn it in while their man works another job or is back on the farm doing his best as one silly student described the scheme. I think that is an ethical shame to cheat like that but then their good christian ethics allows that to happen because they can just be born again later if the guilt should ever really bother them or so one cheater laughingly admitted so the redneck religions are slowly but surely destroyed the integrity of our democracy since the moral truth does not bother the christians when they can make a buck out of a deal because repentance later can be gained by the born-again trick that fools God into blessing them irregardless of the sin..

Politics play a big part for the educational benefits; college professors or teachers in general are paid very little for all the college courses they have to take just to do their job while lowly educated folks get much bigger salaries so anyone who goes into teaching is really dumb or not very wise as an intelligent person should be so noone will ever take a teacher seriously because of the low pay showing that they are not really worth very much as a person since money is the yardstick of true measurement for a person in American society; to make a million is the saying for success, not to be of a high IQ or have intellectual pursuits so I guess that my campus frolics to pass the time of day has finally rubbed off on me as I do overhear the dialogue of teachers and would-be teachers. There is a big shortage of teachers so there are not a lot of low ambition folks after all in this world but women mostly go into the teaching to fill a void until having kids or can teach and be home with the kiddies. Men should not make a career of teaching as that is not much prospects or very ambitious. I had rather be a preacher even though they do not earn a lot of money unless being an evangelist of renowned fame.

Seems odd that Commerce is considered the big town around these parts since so many very small burgs exist; folks think the college makes the real difference for Commerce which is much younger than most of the other really small towns or hamlets. Commerce has one of most of the churches while most little places have only two or three different demoninations. And Commerce has a train station for passenger service and a hotel of odd sorts. Some really big mansions on Bonham Street or silk stocking row do show off the wealth. Commerce I thought would be a hick town berg but is now bigger than old Willsboro from whence so many settlers came. History has an odd way of turning things around suddenly so lots of luck has to happen along with everything or hard work just as Aristotle said that luck was as important as being smart and hard working so the idea of God rewarding christians is not valid or absolutely true as some simple minded folks try to let on, especially when the facts of history are studied and really

known. God does not love any one group of people better than another even though every organized religion says it is the best or that is the message that the small minded members keep on saying. Good acting people enjoy saying bad things about folks; all the relatives treat me like I am poison ivy; they feel superior and act like I am the plague. Ida is just the most open and perhaps the most honest of all in her meanness; misery loves company so unhappy people want to make others just as unhappy as they are when dishing out the hatefulness. Human nature is such that the folly or sin we have within ourselves is the very one folks are least likely to forgive in others. I wish that I could live in big old New York City where no body knows or speaks to anyone else and then I could live in peace for once; it would be nice to have the money to pay all my own living expenses and then live far away from all my folks who feel a deep resentment toward me; they will be glad when I am dead and long gone. I am an embarrassment to all of them since I am censured for my actions while white collar thieves get pardoned since they still have big bank accounts. Money get respect in the long run so the thieving republicans will always be respected more often than the hard working person who is poor.

Thus the old federalist evils are alive and well in the republican party that says one good sounding public thing while yet doing another very private evil thing like talking loudly about individual rights while saying that companies are not to be taxed or even regulated while laws are passed against small or poor folks do have any of the tax benefits enacted for their individual rights to use that the big profiteering companies get to reap; dividends not job creation is the corporate goal by the money mongers; they merge a large company with an even bigger company for tax benefits and then close down jobs that could still exist and yet make a profit for both companies if they were separate in true competition in an honestly free enterprise situation that the robber barons like to give lip service to but they close up all competition when possible to merge them and stop the competition so the prices can soon rise higher. I am not fooled by the clever tactics but then the rich do this and all the social climbing good christians want to be rich themselves so that is a system that will never be stopped because they secretly hope to be able to reap the benefits somehow and then they too will donate funds to save their guilty conscience with a building named for them; true christians do not announce that they gave a gift for that is being a publican but then republicans are the loudest publicans of the extremist Bible lesson for all to avoid unless wanting to be a part of the ritzy crowd.

I would go to a new place to start over if I could get a job and had the strength to work hard like I once did. I wish that I could go back just once more to find one of the five gold mines that the Oklahoma Indian said existed in the mountains; one is near Bartlesville today but I just never could find it. If I got the gold and then enough of it, I could then really show Ida and all the kids and their kids what a grande person that I am; then they would just forget all the bad and then think about how they could get some of my money from me before I die and taxes would get a lot of it; they had all rather have money to worry about than me being around to remind them with my presence that I am a failure who will not leave them a fortune. Wealth is all that counts in this life when city life takes over; people live so close together that things are the only way to impress, not hard work, so the Prince of Wales dudes of this world win after all; life is all fancy dressings for the elegant city folks and everyone else is just so much petty or dull working class blokes like the niggers back at Cherry Wood were not a part of the window dressing so now most folks are just white niggers in the scheme of things that aren't for

the intent of anyone except the super rich who own the Fortune 500 companies stock. White niggers is just what everyone has become who is not rich enough to live on the interest of their money, for the really big rich live off the interest of their money and I do mean living high on the hog. I am certainly now a White Nigger at best, in fact I am not worth enough to be that even since my labor is not worth pursuing by the big companies for their minimum wage labor pool that relies on the negro hollers or ghettos for a great source of cheap workers. A poor devil is considered just that because God rewards God's good followers with wealth so the devil keeps us poor to hear the tales of the preachersmen.

Well, I keep having my say about things that no other way would get said or listened to since folks don't care about old folks in this new fangled citified life. Being younger and very able bodied and thought of as prosperous means everything now that appearances is all that counts in this materialistic society.

I get so angry at my folks but then they are all that I have or I would really be up the shallow creek without a broken paddle. I do want the best for them and that's why I do not tell all the exact names in the old vendetta-feud back at Winnsboro because grudges have a way of never really dying out. The best example that I know and it came into well known notriety just before all the killing started by young Nimrod. Well, down near Cuero with the Taylor and Sutton feud of the early 1870's. Old Captain Creed Taylor was a true Confederate and did not feel that Texas should have gone along with the surrender by General Lee since the capitol was in Texas and our troops had not lost a major battle so the federal regulators met open opposition from the whole Taylor family and hundreds of other folks back then until finally open killing happened when the tyrants of the occupation could no longer be tolerated in the early 1870's so the ideology and personal animosity toward the folks involved broke loose. I have always been told that one of my dad's brothers was Creed; Dad had 7 or 8 brothers, I never did know for sure but they sounded just like my mother talked about the war between the states. A man named Sutton had the ear of the yankee Texas government and even had an illegal army made up of niggers to help him so that irked the whites everywhere; then John Wesley Hardin was kin to the Clements brothers who were followers of the Taylor resistance; the gunfighter helped out but did not keep lots of folks from getting killed; finally the carpathagger or scalwags were ousted from power in Austin so seemingly all was over but Sutton himself was hated so he decided to leave by boat from Indianola but the brother Joe Hardin told Wesley that Sutton was leaving Texas so the Hardin info called the Taylor brothers to go after the SOB where they all over took Sutton and shot him full of lead; a cour case followed with a conviction for the Taylor brother Billy who had shot a man who had not been directly involved in all the other killings but then a later appeal reversed the verdict so that ended that feud. My mother read every word she could get about that case and then made us vow that no Taylor from Winnsboro would ever serve time for killing the men who shot our brother Nimrod in 1868 on the public streets of town. That's why all of us Winnsboro Taylors were determined to keep young Nimrod safe from the warped justice of the law so mother's being rich certainly helped keep the family secret and vow along with being the reason that all of us left the comfort of Cherry Wood to go to wild Indian Territory and then have Jennie Die; no good ever came of all the wondering except to strow us Winnsboro Taylors all over the state and thus have an exciting life that no amount of money could ever buy for us. I would like to write the story of all our Taylor kin who came to early Texas but that would take years to find us all and get the

facts down on paper. I could never do it as I don't know how to use the research libraries that well or can write good enough or type fast enough. But the Taylor family has always gone with the tide of human events for adventure and opportunity like for cheap land in Texas far away for a while from the cunning politics of Washington till now it all has come to Texas with the oil industry being the power base of Texas. People are a small part of the events and any person who says that great people make the big events is silly or else is some ivory tower professor who gives a slick lecture on history to gloss over the real suffering and hard work that I know existed on the frontier in Indian Territory and even in the plantation days of West Texas. The wave of the future is always bigger than any individual and the individual who can flow along is the one who gets rich from the resulting opportunity so luck is a big factor in the person is intelligent to start with and has a decent education to read and write and thus like my old mother to read newspapers from all over to learn what is happening around the whole country and thus make decisions that will be in demand; women are better at this kind of reading than men who prefer to run the company or the landed estate, except my mother was more of a man than any man I ever met; she could do it all; she should have lived in good health till now for I bet she would have owned the biggest oil company in the world all by herself in stock holdings if nothing else. A smart person seizes opportunity when it comes along and thus has the good sense to take hold of the moment when it begins to happen; a simple minded person can only see opportunity from hind sight and thus always talks about the opportunity that got away as though that makes him smart now to see the lost moments; I get so tired of hearing folks here in Commerce talk about what life has passed them by and they brag about it. But I do get tired of the college class lectures that gloss over the real concepts that caused the growth or settlement of Texas and Oklahoma; they say the landrush brought folks to Oklahoma but not entirely so since the product of the times was the high handed republicans in control with their spoil to the victors going to their ilk and thus their haughty narrow minded ways being imposed on everyone in the name of freedom. Professors must not offend anyone so they can't say that republicans are the anti Christ of this country or that they cause money panics and depressions to break the opposition so that the big fish can then buy out the bankrupt companies. The poorly paid teachers want to keep their low paying jobs and thus have to pander to the ideas of the local community, especially the school board or board of regents for the colleges. Freedom is not real at all for real facts to be taught; little Hitlers control what is taught and said in the class room because otherwise the teacher will get right out fired or at least just not get a contract renewed. True individuality does not exist like it did when the frontier had a place to send scoundrels and free thinkers so the marginal places were usta having folks speak their mind even though not everyone agreed. The saying that I may disagree with what you say but I will defend to the death your right to say it is a true American frontier basic belief of a democracy that will last only as long as that concept is practiced but I don't think such freedom exists any more among the social climbing gold bricks who want money over all else or at least want only the trappings of wealth. Mennon is here to stay and the rich are the new gods of this country. Civilized civilized ways are what all the world has come to now and will get more so in the future for the local frontier is gone forever. No way could I ever do again what I did as a young man if I were a strapping young man today; now everyone has to be an upstanding young man of a good family or else no real opportunity exists. 'Tis a good thing that the Taylor family helped settle Commerce and thus owned a big mercantile store and helped found the college or we would be considered redneck white trash today, even I have some respect because of the family ties to the founding institutions of Commerce so all

is not anguish for me to live as an unknown peasant. But I am not an ignorant old man who does not know what he talking about when blaming the robber barons for their dastardly deeds. I do indeed know what I am talking about when I say so often about how the robber barons are; I am not an ignorant backwoods hick that most newcomers to Commerce think. I knew well the son of Hetty Green; Edward Green was her only son and he operated some of her railroads here in Texas; in fact, Hetty Green owned the Texas Midland Railroad that he expanded from the parent railroad called the Texas Central Railroad; he personally inspected the building of the rails around Commerce and he had lived in Terrell too. He was here in 1893 and had a big expanded railroad by 1903 into Commerce and over half a dozen trains a day came out of Greenville through Commerce. Well, Edward Green had a cork leg because of his stingy rich mother Hetty Green who was the richest woman in the world; the little boy had an accident but she was too stingy to take him to a doctor so he lost it and then always had to have a cork leg. He had a private railroad car that he used to live in when inspecting the line so he got out and walked about talking to folks and asking questions about schedules so the story of his stingy mother was well known plus his only sister Sylvia was well known. The Texas Midland Railroad connected with the Houston and Texas Central Railroad; my son Tom went to Houston to work for the railroad during World War I when he was about to turn 17; he looked older than he was, being tall and full grown looking like all of us Taylors grow up fast and have the look of knowledge on our faces so we do look older and wiser than we are at such a tender age so he was yard master at age 17 when really appearing older than 21 to the strangers in Houston who believed him and young Tom had been a call boy back in Commerce; old man Green had given Tom a reference so that may have helped get the job; Tom talked to the Greens when walking by their private cars. Tom also knew Jay Gould the son of the old man Jay who left a fortune to the son; Jay Junior owned Western Union Telegraph as well as railroads and he travelled by private car; in Houston Tom also saw the Gould on his private car when inspecting his properties. I knew old Ed Green as well as anyone around these parts because I was around Commerce often during all those building years for the railroad. Hetty Green bought the railroad that became the Texas Midland Railroad because of her feud with Collis P. Huntington who was another robber baron railroad tycoon; they all tried to outdo each other in both having a bigger fortune but better lines. She hated the government tax collectors as did her son; Edward Green evaded the taxation problems by living on his trains and not having an exact residence time at any one place so no one would know where he really lived. He was rich so he could just called eccentric rather than a scoundrel for evading taxes like the average poor person gets labelled. Thus, I know first hand just how the super rich act and talk because I have personally known them. I tell this as I remember it all so that perhaps someone will someday read this and realize that I do know of what I speak or write so I am not a country bodkin like the tourists passing on the trains through Commerce laugh about the small town folks who they think is backward because we appear not to be going anywheres like they are right now, but someday they may be standing still when someleke goes by saying they are hicks on the side of the road. I still dislike the way rich folks get treated better than poor folks and by other poor folks who cater to the wealthy just because of the riches; no one is better than anyone else just because of money; should have respect based on personal accomplishments and manners, not just raw wealth in the bank account. I am glad that I have known so many different classes of people; I have known robber barons, Indian chiefs, trappers, miners, guides and aristocrats of the old South gentlemen class as well as redneck hicks

and preachers plus outlaw gangs like the robin hood Jesse James and Sam Bass and the World War I doughboy Bruce Williams who was the first U.S. soldier to die at Brest, France and thus got the holiday Armistice Day organized in his honor because a Frenchman Doc Jernett lived here in little Commerce and had relatives still in Paris, France to communicate the idea of starting a world wide holiday as well. And then just 12 miles South of Commerce lives the Winniford and Alexander family who is kin to Adlai Stevenson of Springfield, Illinois and thus knew old Abe Lincoln well back then so little Commerce is more of the center of things that anyone would ever expect to happen to such an isolated place seeminly. Thus, when I harp on things that chap my butt I am not just an empty wagon going nowhere; I don't talk just to hear my head rattle.

I just hope that someday someone reads this and realized that I am not an ignorant dirt farmer who was frustrated about life having passed me by and then decided to write some twisted idea of cursing the dark so to speak. I even saw the great Barrymore family perform on stage. And I also saw Bonnie and Clyde Parker who were also like Robin Hood heroes of their times when they passed through Commerce. My life has not been dull. And maybe that is why I don't hate folks except for Ida since I do not feel that life has passed me by like Ida treats me and others had just because she is really feeling cheating by life not ever offering her anything out of the ordinary except for her gossip queen ways of which she is the most clever and best of her artful kind. I am just feeling my oats now or I would not be bregging so much on paper but I do feel better to write what is on my mind when I get so disgusted with folks in this pig trail town that seems dull to me since I seldom get away for long, but I do hit the rails and ride to Dallas and back or to Texarkana and back in a day so I do get around for an old fart as Ida once called me to one of her elegant friends. Ida does tell dirty jokes of sorts such as a nigger joke that Ida repeats often to her close friends by saying, Reates brought some fresh eggs and fresh sweetmilk that he was told to place on the porch one hot day and then he said but I got a hard bone in my pocket so he was told to get his black ass with that perishable thing inside rite now. And Ida laughs like a common road house queen then. But usually Ida is serious as a judge and not so vulgar so I was surprised to hear that. I could tell her a few raw jokes but no need to get a reputation with examples from my own mouth for her to call he a dirty old man for sure.

I don't get to gloat much about anything I have ever done because my life is not considered worth anything by most of the relatives who think I am a failure because I have no fortune to leave them so they can brag to the Ladies Aid about all the glory that I knew or so wealthy folks get their least casual accomplishment blown up to a big deal when they have wealth to give the church or some organization. I am bitter and resentful of the way prosperous folks get respect just for breathing the same old hot air all the time. Nothing will ever change for the better for me since I am too old to do anything about it but write my bile on the clear pages of my discontent. I don't read much except the daily Dallas News anymore because of the glare; my eyes are better than most, no cataracts like most old codgers who have coke bottle lens. I don't see so well but do see better than most old folks so that is a blessing but Taylors do not have cataracts very often. Things run in families so it is wise to know the health history of the family not just to be vail to know famous folks on the family tree, although that is the reason the DAR folks make such a fuss out of genealogy. I think that the health record or health history is the main reason to know the lineage with the oral history of the family

adding to the interest of knowing all the old timey stuff. Just like I know about old robber baron Ed Green preferring young fun time girls as companions because he thought that keeping the young gals around when they were too young to carry diseases was the way to avoid the curse. Then, he just got another gal ever so tender and innocent to break in when he thought she was carrying on; that's the way most big rich fellas think and thus prefer young women to the more intelligent older woman because a young woman who is not sexually active yet is hopefully a virgin and thus does not have the sex diseases yet. The rich like to play around a lot just like the mobster president William G. Harding did until someone got back at him with food poisoning; lots of folks should have died if the poisoning had been got from bad food at the table but oh no just he got his just deserts for once; he was a robber baron of sexual delights as well as typical of that pompous republican party types.

I get tired of big city folks thinking that small town folk are just hayseeds or the village idiot but then the uppity northerners or yankees think all southerners are lowly dolts or just plain stupid and backward. Northerners are not very good winners about anything since they do not have the good graces to let bygones be bygones; they keep digging up the old hatchet of hurts to talk about everytime they come around and their shrill accents are enough to bust your eardrums, worse than any redneck yakking I ever heard. But when yankees travel abroad they get called yankee go home that shows just how much hatred that word really does bring to mind; I know that all Americans are called yankee abroad but I am glad that northerners get abuse with named calling sometimes just to know how it feels to be mistreated for no good reason, except for bigotry.

I have known all kinds of people from all parts of the country and the world; folks come to Texas for opportunity usually not to fuss about old war wounds now that oil has become the new king replacing cotton and the old South way of life in East Texas. I have been acquainted with people who are doctors, lawyers, Indians, college students and professors, railroaders, oil hands or roustabouts which I was also one, and guides, and carpenters or builders, businessmen and tycoons of the robber baron variety and elegant aristocrats with money and some broke but still well mannered or well bred to show their origins. People are all interesting to associate with when not being a blowhard or old windbag like the Got-Rocks variety of braggarts are now to impress other rich folks. Country clubs have now begun to be organized so that the rich can loll around to impress each other or really just to try and outbrag one another. I read the papers full of the cotillion balls or coming out parties for the big rich to put on airs and act better than god all the time. No wonder so many snooty folks exist when institutions exist to perpetuate all that old hullibellow. I am not impressed but then Ida is and all her ritzy friends are because they want to be just like that and talking about it all just might make it happen here for them or their family later on and that is why I think Ida hankers after the rich so much and all the gossip that follows.

Playing games like dominoes and 42 is considered evil by the old time religion yet still happens when the rich folk get together and then not one thing bad is said when the rich are the sinners. Everett Winniford is a terrible person to play dominoes or 42 with; he discusses all the past play that he missed in the last hand and thus makes even worse mistakes playing in his present hand; then, Everette gets angry as a bull snake and throws a mad fit if he gets skunked; his sister Ella can beat him when no one else can so he really gets angry at her and throws a fit by calling her names;

her own brother is a fury when he loses at a mere game of cards; he is a sight to behold in meanness but then Ida is his mother in law and he has a lot of hostility to let out for sure. Everette also dances deep back on his heels and looks about as graceful as a horse or ass on the dance floor and that is odd for someone from a good family not to have been taught the graces when his sisters dance so well. And that makes Everette angry also so he just flies off the handle real bad when his sister Ella defeats him at a game of 42. Ella's other brother Horace is nice and quiet but he always said that he dreaded the labor tax to maintain the county road in front of their place; the men in the family on the road had to help grade the ditches and repair bridges plus level the ruts caused during rainy times when wagons rot out to ruin the smooth surface; several times a month this has got to be done during a dry spell. And now a money tax is levied so that is another reason that expenses are getting so great on a piece of property because elegant folks don't want to do their fair share of hard labor since that looks like nigger work which by the way was the work that the slaves did to keep the roadways in good repair. But the railroads have bridge gangs that are all negroe except for the white foreman boss, or assistant to help oversee so the niggers still do the dirty work that white folks don't like to do.

Society needs some group of people to keep downtrodden to do all the dirty work that the new rich or newly elegant acting folks don't no longer want to be associated with. Geeks are the ones used to build the railroad beds or rails through the wilderness out west; takes a long time for a group of people to get elegant enough to be considered somebody great even if they have a money for a rich nigger just doesn't get proper respect in polite society even yet. Folks from England or Scotland get proper respect when rich and also from an old family just like nothing ever got done about robber baron Ed Green keeping young girls on his private train cars; his typical own selfish sex interest to corrupt young girls who were yet free of the diseases did not get the ire of the Ladies Aid everywhere because he was rich and usually the employer of their husbands so his sins were overlooked and that kind of double standard is what makes me hate the good christians of this country for they did that in all the many states where his railroad went, just to ignore his sinning while picking on the poor down and out folks who transgress. Rich folks can do anything if they have an anglo name and lots of powerful friends and even more money than most other folks. Just like chewing tobacco doesn't get the bad sermons that smoking does because one cannot see the chewers as easily as can see the smoldering cigarettes or cigars that all smell so bad. Eating too much is as bad so a fat person should be strung up yet most of the preachers are fat as a hog. Sin is a relative thing with the goodie two shoes Christians in this materialistic world.

Ida keeps making hints that I should move out to Dude's so I just keep quiet and pretend to be busy doing my cleaning to notice her. Ider is preparing talk first for what she intends to do as a real mean feat. She likes to talk about something just to enjoy the thrill of anticipation before then actually committing the mean act; I have seen her in action time and again. Ida is a real pro at being good and mean to folks that she decides to get it in for. I am always on her black list. I am her reliable kicking post. I am always there for her to take digs on; Ider can really dish it all out but she is not at all good at taking the least bit of criticism when others drop digs that she lashes back out like now that her Knight relatives live in a smaller house that is not so fine as the one that burned. Ider pretends they are still rich; they are just land poor and that is all; the other Knights though are rich in money as

king Croesus himself with land and money; Tom Knight bought his daughter a husband when she became pregnant so Knight Cheney now has his furniture store by the same name here in Commerce. Ida never talks bad about what a Knight did or even that her brother in law Ira Knight's son hanged himself in the barn so he has only daughters now to take care of him as a boy's wife would not most likely at all tolerate his mother so a girl is all that parents have as a hope to care for them and that is why most folks have several children in hopes that at least one will take care of them in their extreme old age. They just do their christian duty and then grumble about it like with me.

A cyclone hit out near Fairlee where so much good cotton land is. A big church elder got hit so that twister was the work of the devil and not God's punishment for secret sins since he is such a good churchgoer. But his neighbor goes to a different church and also got struck so that case was God's wrath for secret sins since everyone around knows every thing long before it happens. Thus, God was on a rampage again near Commerce and had a fight with the devil near Fairlee according to the local preachers and good christians. That would have been a good thing to witness as an entertainment, but Ida said that God took the form of a funnel cloud so no one could see his face in that battle. Such superstitious thinking just makes christians feel so good about their small minded analysis of things when their enemies get struck. All sorts of nature are the wrath of god just like the Greek gods sent plagues and pestilence on bad folks so human nature once had a dozen gods and now just has one doing all the destruction. Seems odd that god has to do so many bad things to so many people and then the same small minds say that it is not our will to know the will of God yet they just spoke God's judgement down on so many folks and then in the next crazy breath do not know God's will. That is ignorant superstition that should burn at the stake such christians who utter such things; would be better to keep their mouthy trap shut than speak such hateful stupidity in public. I get tired of hearing all that superstitious rattling. Even a deformity of a new child is sent as a punishment on either the parents or the grandparents when someone knows a sin of the family. Oh my how wicked the christians are just to say that mean thing and should be publically whipped or have their tongue cut out and then all that would stop. Good christians enjoy talking about all their sinful ways before they became born again and they talk or brag like their life was good then and now they are dull and stuffy which is true so that brief sinful time was the only good time they ever had and that is why they brag rather than complain about being sinners and big preachers in the pulpit really enjoy telling the congregation about all the big sins they usta to enjoy but now are saved and going to heaven for sure; no one knows for sure that they are heaven bound so that is a big sin to say and shows ridiculous pride that only a simple minded fool would dare proclaim. I get tired of that and then the late spring and summer is a time for the protracted church meetings when no other real entertainment is available as the radio shows and movie houses aren't competitive enough yet. And some preachers say the devil puts on a movie when one is shown during the time that his church is in session. Blue laws are a tool of the selfish christians who can't handle competition if others were open while they have to go to church to prove how good they are; no where in the Bible does Sunday night and Wednesday have the special holy time prescribed or even near noon on Sunday as the only time to worship. What a preacher says becomes God's law, Oh, really, now!

Commerce has a few rich folks with cabins South of town near Dade so a country club is getting organized of sorts and that will make Dade richer someday. Country clubs make big business out of a leisure snob thing for

the idle rich or at least the training ground for the well to do to have a place to teach their snobbishness so big bucks will be made out of having a regular place for the snobs to continue their high handed ways. The old man's club or smokers club or athletic club is giving way to the country club that has acres of places to offer with golf course, tennis courts and swimming pools, but only big cities will do well because the preachers will lambast and condemn anything that they do not yet have a vested interest in so the small town is always 2 or 3 generations behind the times but the college will help transform Commerce sooner than say Horton with the idea of a country club that the rich have already started building as a place to get away from it all in little Commerce.

So many folks have lung conditions or consumption caused by smoking but more so by the wood burning stoves that stifle a house and then the tuberculous condition becomes contagious and then hereditary once a family gets the germs because the disease TB infects the bones and lung cage bones sometimes have to be removed to cure a person. I am no doctor but I do know people that I have been around. I have knowed all walks of life of people so I should know what I am talking about. I know personally a lot of folks or families who settled Texas from the deep South because of health reasons; respiratory conditions are rampant in these parts because of the fumes from wood burning stoves that infect the bones finally in the ribs that sometimes have to be surgically removed and then get passed on to the next generations; Maggie Winniford has asthma conditions because of the family respiratory illness from the Ellis family back in Florence, Alabama; Jim Ellis was dying is why they all went westward as a family from Florence to old Black Jack Grove because the rainy dampness also aggravates the problem that is heridated as Gladys Butler Cash is a cousin of theirs and had treatment in a sanatorium for it all; she can only live in the climate around Amarillo and Maggie Winniford was told to go to the desert to survive but she loves the old place here too much to leave and she is not much older than the good doctor said she would live to be.

Death should have killed me many times because I was exposed to so many things plus all the dangers. Taylors come from good stock and we are very particular about the ones we marry so we don't mix our blood with the shiftless or doleless folks and that helps keep us healthy since hygienic conditions breed among the shiftless dirty folks. We always took baths and washed our hands before eating when I was a child but many folks never did bother to wash up and look neat at the dinner table so a sense a civilization is what sets off folks of good stock from the shiftless trash who thus name themselves by the dirty surroundings that they keep so messy. Not all folks use deodorant even today but that is one good thing about Ida who is neat as a pin and clean as the sky and certainly requires the same out of everyone near her; she is obsessed about being clean but that is better than being filthy like old B.O. Evans who goes about town smelling like an open sewer and his breath is worse. I had rather take a dram of liquor to have that kind of breath rather than old dragon breath from a foul smelling stomach or whatever causes his terrible breath, but his unwashed body is the worst part of all; one can smell him a long way before he finally arrives. Feweee and more feweee is all that I can say and I do hate to say bad things about someone that Ida also dislikes but she is right about that man so rightly named B.O. Evans. I change my BVDs every day and wash them and my socks out each night to dry near the stove while I sleep. Being clean is the secret to good health but never bathe just before going out side in the cool or cold weather so I bathe just before going to bed and then I have no worry about health problems and it makes me sleep better too, of that I am sure. I like a soaking bath in hot water as I can stand up to my neck; I like to smoke a cigar and read the paper in the tub when

get all cleaned up at night but I have to clean the bath tub ring very carefully or Ida throws a wall eyed fit. I hate to take a shower bath because it is like standing in the rain and it costs more for water to use in a shower as Ida gladly points out plus I let my BCDs and socks soak while I sit and read in the tub so the water gets well used up.

I have been thinking more about the robber barons because of old Ed Green and his mother's railroads in Texas; the term robber baron is not used much, instead is the way they live which is Playboy; Ed Green was the original Texas Playboy big rich guy spending millions of his passions but too stingy to pay his railroad workers well and that is the way the wealthy are; has been a lot of water under the bridge since I usta to see Hetty's Green's old private car on the tracks or a lot of splashing over the dam as Ida also says.

Gossip about famous people really interests most folks and the old time robber barons were good subjects. Now the local rich try to be as biggity as the old robber barons were. The country club system is a network of training ground encampments or swanky compounds to carefully teach little town snobs how to be all big and hateful grown up like the big city snobbery; the country clubs are spreading like a cancer because false pride is all the repressed goodie two shoes christians are really interested in if the big show is put on by the local big rich who hold powerful city council seats or is a mayor or president of a bank; the country clubs have queen of the balls to crown their sweet sixteen dear hearts who become rich bitches like Ida; the country club titles are used to delude themselves and to fool everyone else with awarded glamour that makes each little fish of a community club think that it is as good as the big ones in Dallas or in New York City even. But now every state and big city plus many small places have country clubs that are just spreading the ideology of snobbishness under the guise of living the good life where the really important folks who count can get away from it all, meaning to get away from all the rednecks. The smartypants big rich republicans are infiltrating everywhere like swanky nazi concentration camps in reverse with their haughty attitudes to get people to live like they do and thus gradually to become exactly like them; seems so obvious to me that this neo-federalist movement has just gone underground now that the democrats had to save the economy of the country after the republicans destroyed free enterprise as they called it and now the neo-robber baron tactic has a shell game dressing of class that requires big money to live apart from the white trash and redneck part of society; the old aristocratic regime of the slave owning South looked classy and didn't need secret clubs to prove to themselves their own importance because their genealogy proved that fact and was truly inbred. The old plantation system beat the pants off the robber barons industrialization who have perverted capitalism because workers were well fed and clothed to work the land even during bad crop years of no profits while industry neglects all personal contact with the lowly workers just to make money in the name of God and country. The rich do not create jobs to help people; greed is the only reason they do anything ever at all to expand the job markets. I hate the federalist republican party because they are not honest and open about their schemes; they promise freedom for all meaning those rich enough to own or control big institutions with the lobby force to get their rich way. Their true color is greenbacks and sell their soul for 40 pieces of silver every day of their greedy lives; I have been close to the new industrial age workers since 1902 when I started building those wooden oil derricks where I went from one boom town to another ruining the natural beauty of each place. I usta to always think my whole life would be spent at Cherry Wood where I would die and be buried; how simple minded I was then because of our wealth

sheltered us from the fast changing ways of the big cities even though mother read newspapers from different parts of the country. I should be sympathetic to the rich problems but I am not since I have had to work hard for my living and I worked among all races of people and all kinds of vocations as well. I became a part of the people by experiencing so many places and ways of life during my many years. Republicans have made a big thing out of being for the people and by the people, which all is not true at all. Republicans have made our democracy an empire with the imperial holdings that are a contradiction of terms for a true democracy but the greed to expand international business has caused the empire mentality to continue so someday our republic will have an emperor ruling like the republic of Rome finally did; we are more Roman than anything else with our heritage; we give three names to male children like the ancient Romans did and the stadium football field is the modern replica of the olden colisseum with the bread circus games to pacify the crowds and then Julius Caesar's family had been senators for generations and thus very rich when the need to trade for grain to feed the people of Rome took him to the greenery of the world which was Egypt and thus Julius owned the company that brought the grain back and forth to Rome so the title of emperor was given to Julius who got killed by the freedom loving citizens of Rome but then his nephew Augustus avenged the family death and was then given the title of emperor; he lived over 50 years to firmly establish the monarchy. Also, the republicans said that old Franklin Roosevelt would pass the presidency to one of his sons but not so as time proved; the envious republicans want to pass the powerful office of presidency to their own kind of children so their complaints about FERA are really a sounding board to see what the public thinks about that subject before it gets very serious attention from their public lips. Republicans make a federal case out of things to benefit themselves and make themselves look good at the expense of others. Republicans talk about god and country and family a lot to convince themselves of those values first because they are sneaky and just are waiting for the backstabbing chance to get away with a clever crime that is always a white collar crime that is hard to prove and never straightforward like a robber who is at least pointing a gun and asking for your money face to face with the worst thievery is taking it all at your unsuspecting backside like the way Cigarette Adams stole all those years and then got off scott free because he was then a big land owner and ritzy guiding town leader. Republicans will someday fool all the people into establishing a king or emperor in the name of saving all the expense of the election costs; everything republicans do is based on the dollar sign. Their god is a greenback or a money deal. If I had money I would go to a country club and be a republican just to pretend and then laugh at all of them because I would at least be smarter than them and thus I would know better than to believe all the silly rhetoric about God rewarding them for their family ties and religious attendance and love of country just like love of their country means having a big army with a bigger arsenal that is kept full of the weapons made by the really big rich republican stock owners. Patriotism is worth big bucks to keep the arsenal well stocked so that is what they really love about our country and for that reason I hate republicans who are not honest enough to admit that double standard of lies about money being supreme to all else in life rather than principles of high ethical values to god guiding republicans, just like the old joke of a tombstone saying Here Lies An Honest Man, a lawyer and loving father so they now bury two in the same grave. Republicans and a rational honest person do not exist in the same skin; they are after the dollar at all costs so why lie or else that is the game today not to be honest and open with folks. I am a dinosaur left over from the past in

this ever changing world that is now owned and controlled by the rich companies of this country. I am a frontiersman turned citified the same as the other poor souls; no wonder everyone is trapped and desperate to live in cages like some pet on display; the future holds only a citified life for everyone unless we go to the moon or wherever like Buck Rogers in the funny papers shows.

Everyone alive will sell out their ethics for vanity; the vanity for money only if the stakes get high enough or else sell out for vanity for high office titles or vanity of religious accolades that give assurances of going to heaven that preachers award as sugary compliments to church workers and vanity of kinship to frontier families and then memberships in genealogical organizations that trace lineage eventually back to royalty in England, Scotland and Ireland. Vanity makes everyone conform to the current social behavior; I see the symptoms now in socializing Commerce and of course read about it all in the newspaper. I read two or three newspapers from other places in the library at the college. I have now read all the reference books in the huge main reading room; I have read all the books in the psychology section and the philosophy section as well as physical sciences and art section so I have educated my self with a bachelors and a masters knowledge of degrees along with at least ten or twelve subjects so I am now a lot smarter than I was when I first retired here back at dull Commerce town that would be the pits if it were not for the college. Old folks should attend college to put into perspective all the wonderful things they have learned over the years and also to kill time in a constructive way if they don't like gossiping like Ida and being a social butterfly all the time. I just wish that I had taken lots of classes to turn in research papers and thus learn how to write long reports so that this account of my life experiences would be more detailed with good grammar and better punctuation and more exact word choice but I have learned lots of vocabulary by looking up in Webster's words that I did not know when reading plus asking some professors. I made a long list that got even longer with the words that I did not know and I wrote the meaning for them and then memorized those words. Ida Margaret went to college and I read some of her papers so she is smart as a whip and I learned a lot by looking at her work so I do think that studying with a smarter person is the way to go, not to study with a dummy like myself but then the smart one would not want someone dull as me. But if I were the parent of a boy or a girl I would not let them study together in high school because I do not think they really study to learn at that age. They want to fool around in every sense of that word; tomfoolery is more like it as I was shocked at first to learn how folks use fool around to mean sex stuff but then that is a better reference to doing their business than some of the old timey ways of talking around the subject at hand. I have learned a million things since I retired here to Commerce because of the college atmosphere; the professors do socialize with the locals and thus knowledge rubs off along with good manners. But some of the teachers do not have good manners and yet then went to big eastern colleges that are superior to any southern college if the newspapers are telling the truth, yet yankees are not ever taught the exacting social manners that southerners from good old families are taught. We get our mouth washed out if we talk ugly to older folk when we are disrespectful as kids much less using profanity as kids, even a half grown boy has to sneak around to cuss or he gets in trouble with the Ladies Aid group if not his own mother because being tell as an adult does not mean being full grown until age 21 and then never can one talk back to the parents or dispute them when they are wrong even. Must respect the elders and your betters but us Taylor clan never had anyone better than us to bow to as I can tell you. No man or woman is better than a Taylor for

sure I can tell you and everybody in the world should have that much pride or else they will be ruled by a tyrant for sure; of course I am ruled by Ida the terrible in my old age and she tries to rule everyone even Will but he just goes his own way while she nags in the background; they do no quarrel much as he just smiles and goes his way such as going fishing when Ida tries to beg him not to go; she says he will get killed in an accident so he had to take out more insurance for her to feel secure in case he did die. My son Will was never out of a job during the depression like Tom was; Will worked all the time since brakeman jobs were still needed more than switchman jobs. Ida really felt good about Tom not having a job but then the Winniford family helped Ella and the kids by making clothes and giving money along with all the Christmas presents during the 10 years that Tom did not have a job even though he worked odd jobs and Ida was mad that Elsie did not penny for penny that was spent on Tom's family; of course Elsie had a house given to her and a hundred acres of land but that was not enough; someone said 55 acres once so I am not sure exactly. I also know how bad it was to try and not to get a job because my sickness was brought on my not being able to get a job when I was still able bodied and wanted to work but could not get hired but I got healthy as a horse once I could make big gardens and build onto Will's house. Not being able to work kills the spirit just like all those rich robber barons that the papers said jumped out of the skyscrapers in New York City when losing their paper fortunes as that at least got the just deserts for some of the robber barons who helped cause that depression with their excesses in life for once was just. A mental state of constant worry will destroy the human spirit that could be used to enrich humanity. I was glad later to read that fact about the big rich who brought that spruce of the depression on themselves at least paid the ultimate price for their republican ways.

I may write my thoughts about some other things such as about the United States having an influence on the world sense of conscience when personal business conscience is not much considered as even existing. The U.S. idea of freedom for all people influenced the conscience of even absolute monarchs; the 1860's period of freeing U.S. slaves by proclamation made the Czar of Russia open his palace windows and thus declare the serfs free to leave the huge estates and those grateful peasants's grandsons later killed the czars's grandson just like U.S. niggers still hate rich landowners in columned houses. Also the King of Siam in 1860's admired President Abe Lincoln yet he was an absolute monarch and his country became more tolerant of personal freedoms yet that way of life has also changed. Doing things for the good conscience does not pay off for most of the world business deals so the reason of doing something for the big bucks is the only lasting thing that impresses folks around the world. Money has its own language that all peoples understand and world trade strikes down more barriers much quicker than anything else can get through to foreign folks and their leaders. Thus the Jews have spread the big business of trade all over Europe and Asia and the far East after they were driven out of Jerusalem by the Roman Army when their great temple was destroyed and the treasure taken to Rome. Thus the Jews gave us the beginning of capitalism as we know it from the descriptions in the Bible so it is the Jews as God's chosen people that we have to thank for our economic system as well as our religious heritage; Jews call themselves as citizens as being from the country of Jews and they mean their racial heritage even though now just recently the country of Israel has just been reestablished but the capitol governing seat is not the ancient Jerusalem so the old prophecy that the new Jerusalem will usher in the beginning of the last millennium or last one thousand years so the silly fundamentalist churches that say the world will end next year or the next new year do not certainly read the Bible that they claim to worship because the last

millenium means a thousand years period of time if the folks would just look up the word and no one alive now will certainly live to see the second coming of Christ yet nor need anyone fear certain destruction of the earth because the prophecy is beginning to be fulfilled after all in my time now that the new Israel after two thousand years is reestablished. In the final year of the last millenium the graves will give up their dead so that is why some silly religious nuts will not have operations that remove diseased organs because they refuse to go under the knife to lose any part of their whole body that must be raised complete from the grave on judgement day; they seem to think that we just sleep like zombies in the graves till judgement day but I have seen cemetery dug up and moved and only bones were in there so God must have forgot but then I never believed that nonsense. I wish folks would read the whole Bible before they talk it to death around me and other knowledgeable folks but fewer and fewer folks correct anyone who tells the Bible stories wrong since so few know the difference anymore anyway.

Some folks think that preachers cannot be wrong but I know better. That's why I would be a big evangelist preacher is I was young starting out today. And most preachers are fat as hogs and over eating is also a sin. Christ called all folks sinners so preachers who say that they are going to heaven are sinning with that statement because no one knows until that last moment. The fat heads just talk to get controversy and attention for themselves.

Some folks think that being fat is good and healthy but I don't. Of course Ida is tall and big boned and does not look so fat just hefty but the weight is hard to carry around like suitcases strapped to the hips so that is hard on the heart and blood circulation to carry around.

I get so sick and tired of hearing folks say that their family is all important to them when they get around me because they know that I once left my children here to live while I worked as a routeabout. They also say they never go anywhere their children can't go so that keeps much redneck mentality forever on a 12 year old level at best so both the child and the adult remain socially retarded. This is a moron attitude since children need to learn levels of social existence so who wants a smart mouthed kid always telling off-color jokes and butting into the adult conversations or even drinking beer and then staying up late if the whole family must always go only to the same places since I do see those big mouthed blegging fathers drinking beer when they sneak away from their children. But the fundamentalist churches preach that children are pure of heart and not bad so we must all be like little children when any intelligent person knows that children do lie and do cheat as bad as any conniving adults when they figure an angle for themselves. I get tired of such phoney baloney; makes my ass want a dip of snuff.

People who never change as the simple minded think is a compliment means they are simple minded fools and are the disgusting kind of people who add nothing to life or the general store house of knowledge that will improve civilization. Inventions would never result. But the preachers say that good christians should never read a novel, only read the Bible if wanting to please God since only preachers talk to God.

Intellectuals are hated by preachers because religion is an emotional thing so reason is detested and taught as good in order to control the populace. The founding fathers of this U.S. of A. were intellectuals of the first order; their inventions showed their unbounded genius and their ability to write and serve without selfish gain such as the aristocratic Thomas Jefferson who died broke and Benjamin Franklin. Only intellectuals can create new way of life, yet the U.S. businessmen and the religious leaders today denounce intellectuals so our founding fathers would be preachers to hell today by the good people. I get tired of all the false

pretenses about the real reasons things get done; the stupid want every one else to be as ignorant as they and not think out the reasons for why the messy politics are happening like they are; it is easier to say God punished them with a depression or that God caused their bad health so that non intellectual blabber keeps superstition alive and well in the good christian homes of America so that the power and preachers can always continue to control the people just like ancient Egyptian priesthood had control of the pharaoh through the oracle tube of the gods. Anyway, the special business interest of corporations are spreading an empire system of the U.S. government for the sake of making a dollar profit while saying God and freedom are the reasons we are meddling in those countrys that are on our protectorate list; the list is in any library but the preachers say reading the Bible is the only thing that a good christian reads so that keeps ignorance bliss so that the cunning can keep their status quo power and that is why republicans will win the country in the long run since ignorance is the course of least resistance to allow high falluting well dressed folks who say they love us do all the decision making.

Just like Commerce folks blamed a dance band for sin a few years back when a big square dance was held on the town square. Sam Winniford and his renowned string band played on the town square. Sam Winniford is the best violinist in Texas and Namon Anders of Commerce is also part of the band. "anyway couples danced so close together that they looked married already while still in public. Later there were 5 divorces resulting from the evil sinful dance according to the local gossips so the public dancing and playing was stopped, never to allow the band to play again because the work of the devil went on; God's law had to be obeyed said the preachers and all the stuffed shirt elders and deacons. God never gets to speak for himself, seems that some snooty snit of a prune faced bigot always talks for God. God really does appear only the resentful and the ugly folks who themselves can't get anyone to carry on with them. God always gets represented by the folks who pronounce damnation upon others; God is made to be such an ooger then I am amazed that anyone wants to worship the God that is so often presented by these stuffed shirts. History always repeats itself because few read the lessons to profit by them, only the Bible is considered correct reading by the good preachers. The good old days was never all that good. Even being rich back on Cherry Wood had its draw backs because all the inventions that make life easier today had not yet been invented plus entertainment was not much either. Electricity brought the radio and refrigerator to the common household that is much better than having dozens of servants to cook all the meals new each day and then to watch their antics for the entertainment; I like the radio shows that are played but the politics of our government is not revealed on radio so the newspaper reading of at least 5 or 6 different papers is required to know what is happening yet so few folks read even one paper that has any kind of reporting much less analysis. The good old days of the past was bad because so few options were available to the average person so I like all the changes of this century better than the olden ways but the future will not change as much the next 50 years as the last 50 years because religion will hinder all thinking because of controls on free thought are fast drying up now that the frontier does not exist where folks could sit quietly and read the Bible for their religious source while now the radio preachers tell exactly how one ought to think and act and thus the local preachers have got on the band wagon too. All the different tadpole religi are going to destroy the real freedom of this great country; they already say what they think the founding fathers meant while the founding fathers were not Baptists or Church of Christars or Methodists like most folks now had better be to be considered good enough for polite society in this fast disappearing society that no longer exchanges free ideas as a way of life

that is given lip service to as a freedom guaranteed in the constitution that is only interpreted to fit their ideas that are too small minded to allow all freedoms as an exchange of dialogue of ideas. The Little Hitlers are in charge of America while acting through religion and goodness to feel themselves and everybody else. A self lie is the worst kind of lie that the nonintellectual person doesn't even know is happening.

I get so tired of the goodie two shoes types smile to your face and are ever so slick of a con artist just to butter you up for the kill; they talk religion to disarm you so they can then use your own words against you in the next gossip session of theirs when the preachers all meet over a cup of coffee to discuss the big sins of the week in Commerce. The mealy mouthed never blame the real reasons for what happens because supernatural things as an explanation make their life the center of attention as a chief spokesman for God.

The role of the family is a favorite target that is used as the perfect place for the goodie two shoes preachers to boss folks around. They want young people to hurry up and have kids of their own in order to pay for their own raising; the raising of children is a jolt to the selfish young folk so they get further controlled by society with their own squawking kids to support and thus keep their dreams of freedom from ever happening; thus, personal resentment and game playing tricks happen just like Ida and Elsie being so hateful in a nice way to their pitiful family; you don't need the devil of an enemy to hound you when you got Ida and Elsie on your tail. They treat everybody in the family equally mean when given the chance. Prayer does not do one thing to ever change their clever meanness. When they talk, they have to be the center of attention or those two hellions get mean as hell later. I try to love Elsie but I can't; she is too wheaky and outty with her tongue just like her mother.

Well, Namon Anders is a rich man in Commerce with a big two story house just off silk stocking row so he was forgiven for playing the devil's riddle that caused those 5 divorces and then Sam Winniford was just an instrument of the devil so he was not really to blame, being from a good old family has its advantages when the witch hunt gets started by the self righteous moralists but even they can't win over the good will of an old founding family member who is not an out and out sinner like what they preach against. Sam Winniford became a Baptist long ago to quell those ignorant fools while his brother Bob became a Church of Christ along with his wife urgings. Old Sam reads a lot and knows the facts about religion history and the political facts as well but then so does Bob Winniford.

Well, the two Winniford brothers got in an argument over politics and religion one rainy afternoon and the ranting went on the rest of the day. When it came night fall and Bob went home, Sam hid in the trees and then threw rocks at him and hit his head too, really cast stones at his own brother who supports him with cash to travel around and play the violin. That shows just how narrow minded a Baptist is when disagreed with since they can't fall from grace and can thus do anything bastardly to their own loved ones. Sam told that foul deed to Everette and Elsie one night when they were angry at Bob for not giving them any more money; they were all expecting more money to do as they please since they have bled him dry before he died and then none of them visited for long even to help take care of the sick man; that's when Elsie gloated and said to Lynna Winniford that she would not be so high and mighty when her dad died so Bob Winniford deeded his land to his daughters the next day and he could hardly spell his name and had to ask how to spell the name Winniford three times during the legal notarization or so little Bobby cried and told me that he was in the room when his poor sick granddaddy cried and asked how to spell his own name while signing the land deed away from his own sons whose selfish wives hated everyone and loved only their money and land.

along with the prestige of their old name. No good will come of these daughters in law and their pitiful children. Wealth causes a lot of discord in a family and then fame compounds the problems as I should know from all the troubles back at Cherry Wood.

Sam Winniford was a tall man and he could twist his long legs around each other like rubber bands and then tap his toes while fiddling to the beat. He was a grande sight to behold while playing in public; he looked the part of a great musician and he talked with quality not like the nicks or redneck white trash in these parts, guess his travels had refined his speech. Sam went to Washington to play for Mister Sam Rayburn and the presidents or whoever was president; he gave only private recitals because he did not charge for his fine playing. Just like Little Bobby said that one rainy day that Sam Winniford was playing his fine violin music (he had a Stradivarius violin) and little Bobby stood in the doorway to look at Sam's entwined legs that were going to the beat of the music and well old Sam looked up and said that he had not invited the boy to listen to his music so git. As if one could not help but hear that music all over the bighouse at Winniford Way and all over the south 40 as the other cousins around usta to say. Sam seemed unkind to a boy but he was a character who really didn't want to be bothered by a child. Bobby was never a child though; he did not like to play with others little boys or little girls; he preferred to be around grown ups as he said because they had so many more interesting things to tell and to relate about what they had done in their lives with all the place that had been and that is why that I am trying to write all the things that I remember as I do recall them now since Bobby has urged me to record some of the things that have happened in my long life before all gets lost forever as he calls it; he prefers to stay at the farm as much as possible and even has his own railroad pass to come every weekend from Texarkana to Commerce where his aunts pick him up and they shop and then go back to the farm; two trains a day each way make it easy to travel back and forth these days and that is another reason that modern times are better than the olden days.

The radio is a great entertainment for me; the radio church broadcast out of Laredo is a hoot or a laugh a minute if it weren't all so real and dangerous when believed.. These radio preachers attack the knowledgeable person as subsuming to the work of the devil and thus is now evil himself. This is a ploy to attack the messenger of the news rather than eradicate the source of real trouble because then nothing will ever change so that the status quo will always remain the same. Thus, by reading to learn the facts about politics or the gradual development of the translations of the Bible makes folks think that even Christ spoke English rather than Aramaic. And some think Christ is a Baptist because his cousin John the Baptist baptized him. The truth is not important if the right people say the lies.

Nothing ever really changes, just like negroes aren't slaves sold on plantations but they are economic slaves in a nigger holler or ghetto today so that the rich have to pay lower wages than it would take to feed and clothe the workers but they are free to choose poverty as a way of life. Only a good christian would reason like that since God has ordained everything exactly as it is and uses these conditions to teach a lesson. We are not even supposed to water the garden in the hot summer to save the draught because God intended for everything to burn up and that is corruption God's natural order of things and we are wicked to water the plants. Well I have been sinning up a storm to save the okra and tomatoes and even old Ida appreciates that sinful behavior; she just laughs when something is said that she doesn't agree with by a preacher; her favorite fun sins are not to be discussed as bad so she goes her own way like most other folks do when the meddling gets started when nothing else better to do in town gets the attention of the stuffed shirts or do gooders on their tere of a

social clean up when they think folks are enjoying themselves too much. Misery loves company so the religious nuts have got to put a monkey wrench into everybody's good times, and then they blame it all on the devil when they go down to the mourner's bench at church. Now, that church scene is the real show in town to watch. Makes my ass want a dip of snuff so see such false front christians at work.

So many of the do gooders make headaches for everyone else and they take a headache power to cure it. I never ever have headaches and not one of my children does either; we don't ever take aspirins; neither did my Laura Estelle take aspirin but then she did not set the example of taking pills in front of our children as aspirin made my Laura Estelle's heart act up by skipping a beat and then taking bicarbonate of soda makes the heart beat faster yet so that all causes heart problems if taken. We Taylors do not have headaches and neither does Ella Winniford's family; I don't understand a family that has to take pills and I guess they are just weak minded folks so maybe that is why the religious nuts give everybody else a headache to match theirs so that misery loves company. My only sickness was when I was first out of a job and then Tom came to Graham to get me so I could live back here in Commerce. Now that my only sickness is long over and I am now back to being my old self. People who let any one thing get the control of them is weak minded. Will has quit smoking several times just to prove that he can do it but he always go back to it. That smoking problem is an addiction like dope or like alcohol; the Taylor menfolk always love to smoke and drink a lot, seems inborn to do that and we are all stubborn as the devil about not quitting if someone else says we should. No reason to be bossed by anyone since this is still a free country about some things. We Taylors don't have old age mental crazy problems like most families; we Taylors are a brain trust of memories that keep our minds sharp I guess; we remember things too well sometimes for our own good since we do not ever forget like an elephant when we are done wrong like the way Ida and Elsie do me bad; I would be very mean if I got a fortune suddenly and could make them eat crow for just once like they truly deserve but I was glad to hear Elsie bemoaning and screeching over the fact that her father in law Bob Winniford had deeded his land away so she found out as soon as the deeds were recorded in the court house because a secret from Ida and Elsie is impossible to be kept or from anybody in a small town because everybody's business is thus everyone's business as all folks enjoy gossip too much not to find out everything about everyone.

Folks just look for something to spread about everyone; they had much rather be the first to tell the gossip than just wait and hear it later. Gossip rather real or made up does not make any difference to the very good christians who spread the least tidbit of information or morsel of knowledge. But it does seem so odd that true information is what Ida has to tell and she manages to learn it just before it all becomes official for the whole town or county. Ida should work for the FBI as she would be the best agent in the history of the world and Ida would be good at getting confessions from criminals or fugitives because her voice would drive them crazy if not her browbeating methods. Knowing everybody's business is common knowledge in this small town so there is no need ever to try and keep a secret from anyone. I would move to a big city if I had a fortune suddenly just to be able to live a life of peace and quiet rather than be under constant suspicion and snide remarks by the snooty folks who are really everyone else living in the small town that respects only the rich since getting a new car every year is the real status as a sign of having wealth if you also have a big house and fine clothes and very nice furniture. The big new car is the big status symbol for sure and that raises eyebrows in approval for sure; materialism is the real worship service of the good christians to talk about and show off at church each

new frock and jewelry. Do not have a chinaman's chance around Ida to win at being better at anything.

Cold weather snaps are the time that are the killers of people. The warm or hot weather is a relief for old folks but the cold weather is a harsh killer. When the sap goes down or up in the trees, then old folks start dying like flies. Death gets folks with double pneumonia or merely freezing to death even. Blackberry winter in late May or early June can hurt bad because the warmer season fools with the good warmth when sudden change back to the winter cold for a few days causes winter amid spring time. Also, Squaw summer or Squaw Winter in the late fall is just as bad; the Indians called the return of summerlike weather in the winter being like a Squaw renewed with life before the killing cold again. This is usually long after Indian Summer is over; I like the dog days of August or the sun dogs in the sky that keep the days hot and dry so that I can get outside and walk to all the places I like to go without fear of rain or gusty cold winds to hinder me. The bad cold rainy and snowy weather keeps me inside underfoot to Ida. Whether one of us likes that.

I was born in the winter time and I just know that I will die in the winter time, not because I want to but because I just feel as I did even as a boy that my beginning and ending would come under the same conditions of nature. Just hope that no big pregnant woman is about to have her baby when I die like my mother had me so fast when upset that my dad died in her arms. I don't dread dying; I just want to live to be 90 and thus give Ida a bad time as long as possible and she sure is afraid that I will outlive her. We are mortal enemies for sure but have to live under the same christian roof; good acting folks do the meanest things to each other and that just proves that God loves a good laugh to keep from getting so bored with all the nice stuffy etiquette rules that good society folks think are what God wants people to act. The end of the frontier has really destroyed all the true grit of folks and their driving force that was once used to conquer hostile Indians and harsh nature is now being used to be powerful over fellow human beings. Hitler is the product of the times of good folks having to blame some group of scapegoats for the bad times and then being mean as hell about it to work out their own hostility, even the Roman Catholic church did not oppose Hitler because of fear to lose their church properties so money lust is truly the worst sin of all because things will control the mind to justify any means necessary to obtain the materialism. So many Little Hitlers now exist in this country and only a democracy produces such horrible Hitler types for Hitler was head a republic himself and a king would never do such horrible things that would reflect on his family name. Read Machiavelli to learn that a prince must have a good reputation when destroying your enemies so aristocracy as I have all ways said is best to have as the rulers because the role of family being on the throne for ever is a goal to be good seeming and not so cruel, just like England has rule of the aristocrats even in the Labor Party prime minister like Churchill for then only good old families rule for glory not merely greed like politicians go to Washington to make millions for their self and their backers while a few old families rule with pride in self and their country like Thomas Jefferson did not get rich at expense of the government contracts. Too many Little Hitlers exist in our society because they want to tell everyone how to live their lives exactly minute by minute to show just how good of a christian they are to be able to boss others by their own good example. That kind of bossy hitlerism will destroy this country someday for I can see that the future frontier lies in ideas that will gain political attention and thus power to create voters who will say you are the greatest ever and over until the big time small minded do goods believe that vanity themselves. Commerce is like that already and it is a

miserable place to live unless you are rich and a big church workers. There is no rest for the wicked doing their dastardly deeds upon the good folks who remain quiet and passive. It is high time to tell the truth about Ida and all her ilk who do mean things to folks in the name of goodness. I would have a buschel of fun getting her just dues for once; it would be tons of fun to see Ider squirm but always my mother said that I was a caution a out getting even with hateful people.

Ida always has something sly up her sleeve when she says that I whiled away my youth in idleness out in the woods and also being a guide up to Oklahoma territory when I should have earned a good living for my kids; Ider won't listen that I wash hunting a gold mine in Oklahoma that the Indians said existed--I have learned just to let go like a humming bird when Ider gets started on me. She is like an A&M Aggie in town making hay or painting the town red when giving me hell.; bygones are never just never bygones with Ida. I don't have to make the same mistake but twice is what bad faced ole Ider always says about me.

I just get up off my rusty dusty to ride the rails to Dallas or just anywhere to get away from Ider's acid tongue; hell has no fury like a woman named Ida scorned and the hit dog always hollers the loudest since she hates me so bad to speak out with her Christian duty to inform about sin being committed by me. Ida's family was once so down at the heels poor that she likes to attack the downtrodden like she was or I guess that is exactly what is eating her mean streak. Ida says that I don't have the good sense to get in out of the rain when I walk slow on my cane because I am old and stove up too much to run anymore--all that snowy cold winter guides into Oklahoma really got into my old bones but I do keep moving. I shuffle down to the pool hall every day just to get out of the house and away from Miss Ida; she doesn't want me under foot in the house but yet must fuss that I go to the pool hall when she is glad that I do leave the premises. Ida has no classy manners; a person who makes the fewest people feel uncomfortable is the best bred in the group or so my dear old mother taught so Ida fails the class test. Well, I met two girls known to have round heels; these loose women or whores were boinking the rail road men; sex or nookie was their trade. The cockscomb railroaders gave the gals the eye, yet these men go to church and proclaim the best deeds as their way of life. They then have not one red cent left after their encounter; and Ida always knows about such things happening in Commerce. I am at least tickled to death that she spreads the word on other goodie two shoes; Ida gets all bent out of shape when she likes someone who gets gossip spread and her nose stays out of joint for weeks. Ida does not want anyone to have a ripnorting good time; she wants everyone sinful to look like warmed over death and to be very unhappy so I keep playing up a storm of activity to keep Ida on her toes. Life is the same old 7 and 6 around Ida's loud mouth. I am tickled to death to cause her some discomfort when I can but Ida would throw me out if Will would permit it yet I can no dare to be as mean as Ida deserves when she agitates me. Life is hell around Ida; no need to die and be punished in everlasting hades because Ida is the devil's handmaiden here on earth; she smiles a happy face to her rich friends but anarls her ugly self to me and folks of poor means. Ida says she is doing God's will by denouncing sin when living me a bad time but she is really an anti-Christ who professes godly ways but is really a devil herself. I will enjoy seeing her in hell forever since she says that I will surely go to hell but I will get there well ahead of Ida and thus have seniority to dole out punishment that can be melted upon her ugly brow. I do look forward to that eternity of seeing her suffer like she has made me do all these years just to be her mean self.